

Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan



Irisol Gonzalez paints at Andriell Terrace for the Urban Arboretum Trail project, 2021. Photo by Ernesto Moreno.



Infusion Fund
A Partnership for Arts + Culture



Arts + Culture

October 2023
City of Charlotte
charlottenc.gov

Foreword

Dear Fellow Charlotte-Mecklenburg Residents,

As co-chairs of the City of Charlotte's Arts and Culture Advisory Board and the arts and culture plan steering group, we are thrilled to share the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan—a comprehensive, 10-year plan to sustain and cultivate arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. As Charlotte and Mecklenburg County rapidly grow and change, so does our arts and culture sector's needs and opportunities. This plan was the result of a community-wide effort to identify how we can support and grow arts and culture in, by, and for our community as it evolves.

Arts and culture have long contributed to our quality of life here in Charlotte-Mecklenburg: They bring us together, build understanding, contribute millions of dollars to our local economy, enhance social ties and emotional wellbeing, support learning and innovation, and offer opportunities for both self-expression and professions. The collective vision in this plan gives us a framework for

how we can ensure a thriving, inclusive and equitable community through arts and culture for the long term. We encourage you to find the places in the plan that resonate most with you and play your role in this journey. If that is in collaboration with your fellow Charlotteans and Mecklenburg residents, so much the better! The plan is meant to be a living document to use, iterate on, and adjust as we go.

We humbly thank the thousands of you who shaped this plan through your participation in meetings, surveys, interviews, and events. We thank the Arts and Culture Advisory Board members, the community steering group, and additional task force members who volunteered hundreds of hours to the development of this plan. Thank you, as well, to the City staff and consultant team for facilitating this massive endeavor.

Now, let's keep it going: The journey is the destination, and we look forward to walking the road together.



Cyndee Patterson
Arts and Culture Advisory Board
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cyndee Patterson".



Kevin Patterson
Arts and Culture Advisory Board
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Patterson".

Charlotte won my heart in 2018, when I was first introduced to the city and its arts and culture community as part of the team at the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Since 2021, I have been honored to serve as the city’s first arts and culture officer — a distinct opportunity to become immersed in this very special community and work more deeply and immediately as a member of the community of artists, creative groups, and residents that I serve.

Arts and culture are vital to both the economy and quality of life in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Arts and culture attract visitors, sustain residents, create jobs, and promote placemaking and place keeping. Arts and culture also are a powerful force for good in our community, providing opportunities for education, civic engagement, entrepreneurship, personal expression, and mutual understanding.

Many Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents know that we have a vibrant arts and culture scene, but there is more work to be done. That’s why the City of Charlotte commissioned the development of a community-based, comprehensive arts and culture plan. Charlotte is a city that is proud of its ongoing arts and culture heritage, and the community partners who led development of this plan, including the City of Charlotte, are committed to making it accessible to all.

This plan envisions the future of the arts and culture sector in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. It was developed through a collaborative process led by a community steering group of artists and creative practitioners, arts and culture organizations, community members, business, civic, and philanthropic leaders, and city and county officials and incorporates input from over 3,300 area residents. It outlines a shared vision and a roadmap for achieving a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable arts and culture community that benefits all people in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Realizing the shared vision by implementing this plan is going to take all of us. I thank every person who has shaped this vision and plan, and I look forward to the collaborations — new and ongoing — that will get us to our destination together.



Priya Sircar (she, her, hers)

Arts and Culture Officer

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Priya Sircar".



Charlotte Site Tour, Mint Museum

Glossary of Terms

Listed in alphabetical order

ALAANA: The acronym for the racial and ethnic identifiers of people from African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American ¹ backgrounds.

Arts: Encompasses a diversity of experiences including music (instrumental and vocal), dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, industrial design, costume and fashion design, motion pictures, television, radio, film, video, tape and sound recording, the arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of such major art forms, all those traditional arts practiced by the diverse peoples of this country and the study and application of the arts to the human environment.²

ASC: Arts & Science Council

CATS: Charlotte Area Transit System

CMS: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

CRVA: Charlotte Regional Visitor's Authority (CRVA)

Culture: All the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation. The holistic combination of learned and shared beliefs, values, and practices that create cohesion in a group.³

Cultural institution or cultural organization:

Examples of cultural institutions include museums (types of museums: including art, history, natural history/ anthropology, and general museums, children's museums, science centers, planetariums, nature centers, historic houses/sites, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, and arboretums), libraries, archives, art galleries, theaters, concert halls, etc.⁴

Diversity: Includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

Equity: The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.⁵

FFTC: Foundation For The Carolinas

Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.⁵

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.⁶

VAPA: Visual and Performing Arts Center

¹ Grantmakers in the Arts

² National Endowment for the Arts

³ Boston University School of Public Health

⁴ Institute of Museum and Library Services, Museums for All statement

⁵ City of Charlotte Diversity, Equity, Inclusion policy

⁶ The Center for The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center



Sector workshop at Innovation Barn

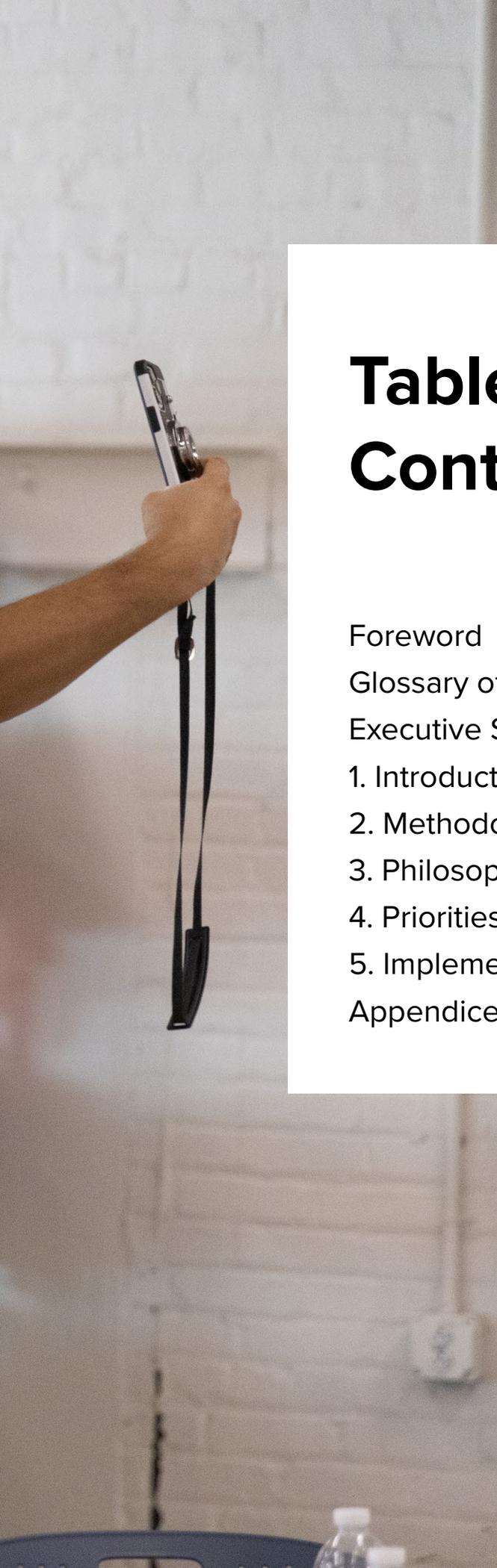


Table of Contents

Foreword
Glossary of Terms
Executive Summary
1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Philosophy and Vision
4. Priorities and Strategies
5. Implementation Guide
Appendices

Executive Summary



Charlotte has a bright creative future.
This plan is created by, with, and for communities throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Vision

A community where all people value, support, and thrive through arts, culture, and creativity.

Philosophy

Arts and culture are essential to our community.

Through arts and culture, we come to know and understand each other. We appreciate our pasts and build a better future together. Through arts and culture, our daily lives vault from existing to thriving.

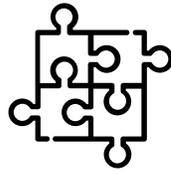
Arts and culture are vital, and we do not take them for granted. Every person deserves to experience creativity and cultural enrichment. Together, we must cultivate arts, culture, and creativity for everyone.

1



Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

2



The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

3



Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining ***ALAANA**, ****LGBTQIA+** and other artists, and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

8



Expand arts education experiences — early childhood to lifelong learners — for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, robust workforce development, and the retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

Priorities

4

Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

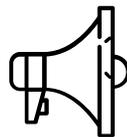


7



Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

6



Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

5

Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.



*ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

**LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Road to the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan

WHY

The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan was created to ensure a thriving arts and culture ecosystem to benefit all in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Numerous local and national studies demonstrate the enormous value of arts and culture to community life in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Benefits include advancing quality of life in more vibrant neighborhoods, generating pathways for social mobility, bolstering economic resilience, and improved physical and mental health.

WHY NOW

Charlotte-Mecklenburg continues to grow and diversify, while grappling with historical and ongoing economic and racial disparities. Cultural equity is a key goal as Charlotte-

Mecklenburg strives to be a 21st-century community with livable neighborhoods, strong connectivity, creative residents, and visitors drawn to its innovative vitality.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg area is rich with creative talent, with a history of support from the City of Charlotte (city), Mecklenburg County (county), corporations and private foundations, towns, and individual donors. However, by 2020, a decades-long decline in workplace giving, shifts in corporate philanthropic philosophies, and lagging recovery from economic downturns resulted in significantly reduced revenues to the Arts and Science Council (ASC) and, by extension, reduced funding to arts and culture organizations. The global coronavirus pandemic exacerbated these financial challenges.

To stabilize the sector, the city identified a two-pronged approach:

1. The establishment of the Infusion Fund, a temporary, three-year initiative spearheaded by the City of Charlotte in partnership with the Foundation For The Carolinas (FFTC) and private donors¹, to sustain local cultural organizations and artists in fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024.
2. The creation of this arts and culture plan, which involved a community-engaged process and provides a blueprint to ensure a successful future for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

HOW AND WHEN

The planning process spanned nearly 18 months, beginning in Spring 2022 and ending in Fall 2023.



¹Infusion Fund partners

The State of Culture Report was released in February 2023 to provide the results of the extensive data collection and analysis in Phases 1 and 2 of the planning process.

The State of Culture Report laid the foundation for community decision-making with a 360-degree review of the area's cultural environment, including:



Analysis

Analysis of existing data and plans pertaining to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture sector.



Assets

Creation of a cultural asset inventory and interactive map.



Funding

Assessment of the local funding landscape.



Comparables

An examination of funding and governance in comparable communities across the nation.



Engagement

Key findings from robust areawide community engagement.

WHO: INCLUSIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

The process was guided by a steering group of 40 community members, including the city's Arts and Culture Advisory Board, to ensure that the future of arts and culture is shaped by diverse voices. The Advisory Board includes representatives from across the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community; half of the board is appointed by Charlotte's mayor and city council, and half of the board is appointed by the Foundation For The Carolinas on behalf of private sector donors, including one appointment by the Arts & Science Council. Additional community members served on taskforces to develop the strategies and implementation activities found in this plan. Altogether, the strategies to realize this plan were developed by over 70 community voices, working together.

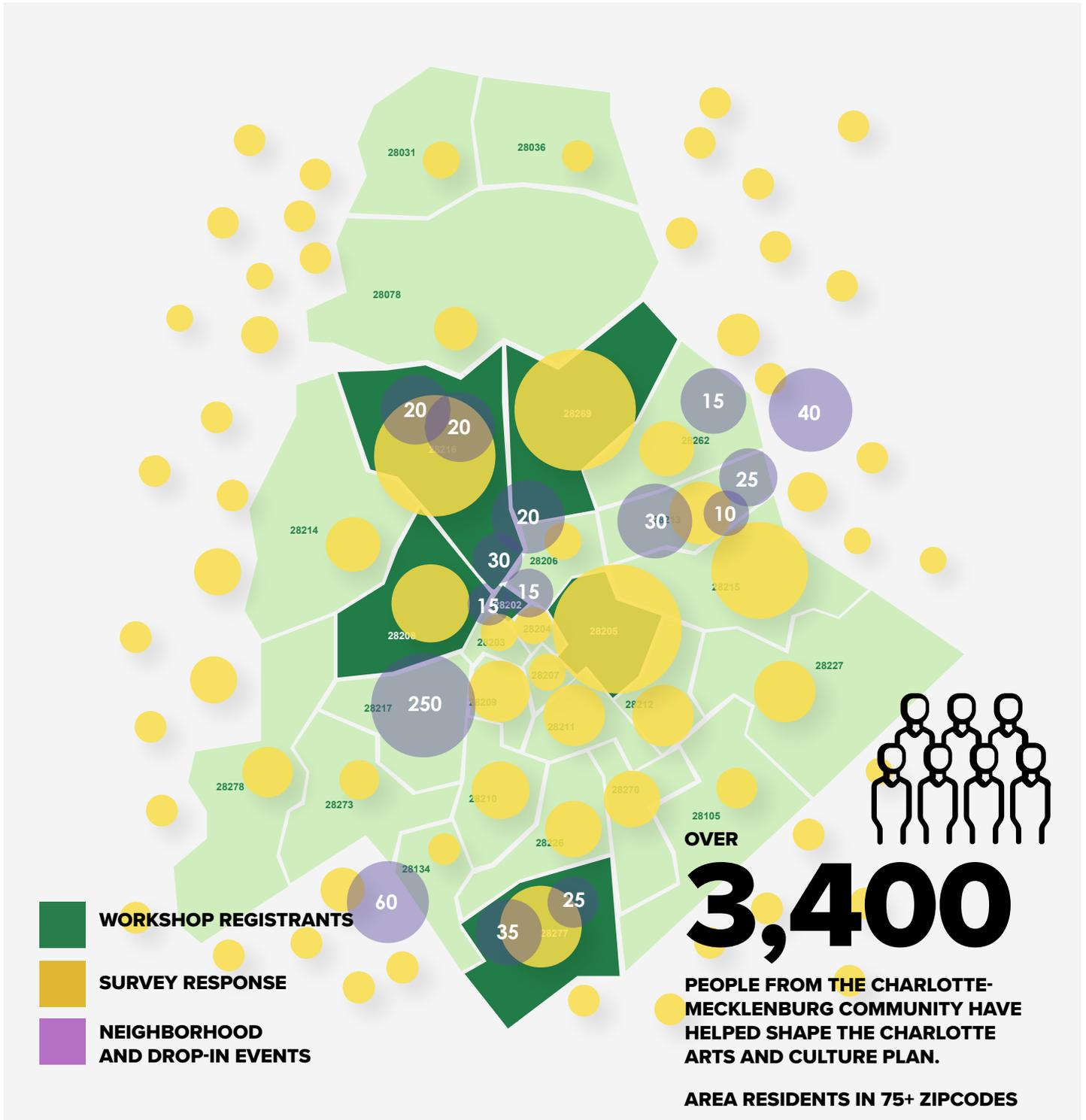
The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan's public engagement process was extensive and inclusive and included:

- Countywide meetings
- Online survey of cultural participation
- Community conversations and Do-It-Yourself Toolkits
- Community Ambassadors
- Neighborhood/drop-in events
- Stakeholder interviews
- Sectors workshops
- Digital communication and outreach

The final stages of this planning process included conversations with city council members, staff of the county, city, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, and the public, to ensure clarity and consensus on the contents of this plan.

Public meeting for Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan

Over 75 ZIP codes in the county and surrounding areas were represented in public engagement, as represented below:



STRATEGIES

Strategies for each priority are listed below. In the implementation plan, each strategy is accompanied by detailed actions to achieve the priorities and strategies.

PRIORITY 1

Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

Strategies

1. Secure significant, ongoing public sector support — primarily ongoing, annual support from the city and county, with supplemental support from state, regional, and national sources.
2. Foster ongoing/increasing private financial participation.
3. Build organizational development capabilities.
4. Build capacity of organizations and artists/creatives to develop sustainable revenue models appropriate to their respective operating models (nonprofit, for profit, individual). (See Priority 2 re: coordination and implementation of arts and culture plan priorities).

PRIORITY 2

The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

Strategies

1. Establish and implement a joint, public-private governance structure focused on cultivating a sustainable, thriving arts and culture ecosystem in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
2. Ensure and coordinate ongoing delivery of equitable, accessible, and inclusive funding and services to/for the arts and culture sector.
3. Shift the decision-making for funding and the direction of the arts and culture sector to be more inclusive and transparent.

PRIORITY 3

Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining *ALAANA , **LGBTQIA+, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

Strategies

1. As part of the new governance process, ensure that equity goals are defined and progress is regularly evaluated and reported by an external auditing body.
2. Create an ecosystem of funding to support artists and arts and culture organizations at multiple levels or tiers; tiers may be based on the organization's budget size.
3. Provide an application and a grant process designed to engage and attract artists and organizations who traditionally are underrepresented in funding awards to apply for grants.
4. Growth Fund: Create resource (funding and training) pathways for individual artists and small, mid-size and grassroots organizations to advance with mentoring, guidance, and assistance.

PRIORITY 4

Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

Strategies

1. Partner with city/county/private businesses to 1) convert vacant spaces into multidisciplinary art centers and 2) identify/incentivize the creation of arts districts inclusive of all forms of art for creation/rehearsal/practice/display and experience.
2. Partner with developers and corporations to intentionally build, renovate, incorporate, and operate

*ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

**LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

multidisciplinary art spaces into new construction and existing buildings for practice/rehearsal/creation/display and experiences.

3. Prioritize local artist access and affordability to city-/county-owned public art and non-traditional art spaces (i.e., libraries, schools, parks, houses of faith, etc.).

PRIORITY 5

Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.

Strategies

1. Provide tickets and transportation to arts and cultural events.
2. Enable cross-cultural shared collaborations, shared experiences throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and an abundance of diverse, local creative work throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
3. Ensure the resources exist in neighborhoods and communities throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg whereby creatives at all levels are encouraged and supported.

PRIORITY 6

Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

Strategies

1. Conduct qualitative and quantitative market research in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to understand:
 - Attitudes of non-participants toward the arts and motivating factors for arts and culture participation.
 - Extent of support by participants and reasons for support (or lack thereof).
 - Perceptions of the value of a vibrant arts and culture ecosystem in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.
2. Create, implement, and maintain a comprehensive Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture communication plan with revised branding, marketing, and messaging, including social media hashtags or other mediums, in conjunction with the Charlotte Regional Visitor Authority and other regional partners to encourage

increased local participation in arts and culture and to raise national and international visibility of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture offerings.

PRIORITY 7

Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

Strategies

1. Incentivize and enable cross-sector collaborations within the creative ecosystem and with other sectors (such as healthcare, manufacturing, education, social service, etc.) through funding and technical support.
2. Build capacity for collaborations across the sector through networking, infrastructure, and financial resources.

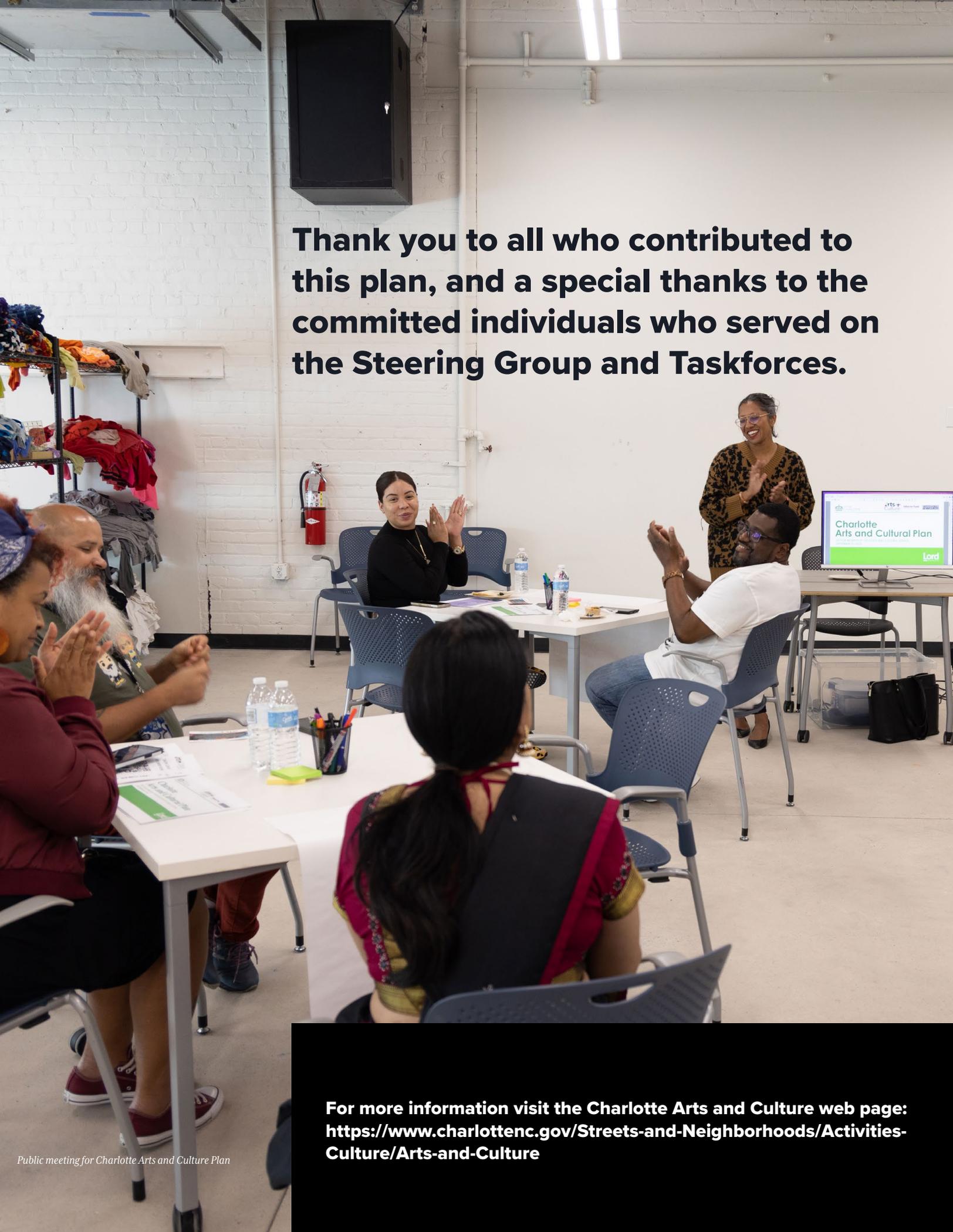
PRIORITY 8

Expand arts education experiences — early childhood to lifelong learners — for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, robust workforce development, and the retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

Strategies

1. Articulate and advocate for the value of arts education across all demographic sectors, i.e., all ages, races, genders, ethnicities, geographic locations, etc.
2. Strengthen arts education in all pre-K-12 schools — public, private and charter.
3. Increase support for arts teachers and teaching artists through increased funding, leveraging community partnerships and professional development opportunities.
4. Fortify and expand educational programming from local arts organizations.
5. Create pathways for people to become professional artists, entrepreneurs, and business owners within the creative sectors.

Thank you to all who contributed to this plan, and a special thanks to the committed individuals who served on the Steering Group and Taskforces.



**For more information visit the Charlotte Arts and Culture web page:
<https://www.charlottenc.gov/Streets-and-Neighborhoods/Activities-Culture/Arts-and-Culture>**

Arts and Culture Plan Steering Group

Arts and Culture Advisory Board

Allene Barber, Director, Executive Communications, Lowe's

Charles Bowman, Bank of America President of North Carolina and Vice Chair for Wealth Management in North Carolina (Retired)

Aisha Dew, Artist, Arts Administrator and Political Strategist

Julie Eiselt, Former Charlotte City Council Mayor Pro Tem and At-large Commissioner

Irisol Gonzalez*, Charlotte Artist

Melody Gross, Domestic Violence Prevention, Courageous SHIFT

Alvin Jacobs, Jr., Photographer and Activist

Lex Kimbrough*, Filmmaker, Brave Boy Media

Su Ping Lu, General Counsel – Securities, Governance and Corporate Finance, Honeywell

Shefalee Patel, Independent Artist and Community Volunteer

Corey Mitchell, Arts Educator and Founder/Artistic Director, Theatre Gap Initiative

Grace Nystrum, SVP, Strategic Market Executive – Charlotte, Global Banking and Markets, Bank of America

Cyndee G. Patterson, Advisory Board Chair; President, Lee Institute/The Duke Mansion (Retired)

Kevin L. Patterson, Vice Chair, Arts and Community Board Member

Pat Phillips, Independent Financial Services Professional (Retired)

Lisa N. Schoder*, Vice President of Integrated Media and Partnerships, Lowe's

Charles Thomas, Charlotte Program Director, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Nick Tosco, Attorney, Poyner Spruill

April Whitlock, Head of Corporate Citizenship, LendingTree

Dr. Ricky A. Woods, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church-West

**Former Advisory Board Member, participated in process*

Additional Steering Group Members

Carla Aaron-Lopez*, Photographer, Printmaker, Curator and Collagist

Jose Alvarez, Vice President of Prospera-North Carolina

David Butler, Photographer and Videographer, Hue House co-founder

Alli Celebron-Brown, President & CEO of McColl Center

CarlosAlexis Cruz, Associate Professor of Physical Theatre- UNC Charlotte

MyLoan Dinh, Multidisciplinary Artist

Charlie Elbersen, Insights and Brand Strategy Senior Director, Wray Ward

Dr. Maha Gingrich, Lead Control Management Officer-Policy and Governance at Wells Fargo

Lois Inghland, Vice President, Community Engagement & Corporate Responsibility at Atrium Health

Leslie Johnson, Deputy County Manager for Sustainable Communities

Manoj Kesavan, Founder and Director of Charlotte BOOM Festival

Joe Kuhlmann, Owner of The Evening Muse

Chandra McCloud, Dance Department Chair, Northwest School of the Arts, UNC Charlotte

Tim Miner*, Co-Founder of Charlotte is Creative

Tom Murray, CEO at Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Samantha Nevins, Executive Director-Disability Rights & Resources

Joanne Rogers, Gallery Owner at Nine Eighteen Nine Studio Gallery, LLC, Co-Founder of VAPA Center

Doug Singleton, Executive Director of Charlotte Ballet

Kristerpher Smith, Senior Vice President, Strategy & Initiatives Manager at Bank of America

Bob Stickler, Board member, Charlotte Museum of History

Krista Terrell, President of the Arts & Science Council

Marcellus Turner, CEO and Chief Librarian of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

Jay Ward, City of Charlotte Inaugural Poet Laureate

Meg Whalen, Director of Communications and External Relations at UNC Charlotte

Mike Wirth, Visual Artist, Digital Experience Designer, Muralist, Associate Professor of Graphic Design at Queens University

**Former Advisory Board Members*

City of Charlotte Staff

Priya Sircar, Arts and Culture Officer
Brittany Clampitt, City of Charlotte Communications

Charlotte Lamb, Strategy and Budget
Julia Martin, City Manager's Office



Public meeting for Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan



Section 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

This document is the culmination of extensive community conversations, policy and initiative research, analysis of existing cultural assets, and visioning among a broad cross section of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s diverse communities. The process has led to a common shared understanding of the current state of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture landscape — which will be addressed in the following pages — and what will be required to bolster it.

This plan sets a community vision for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. It also provides a playbook that residents, businesses, organizations, artists, creatives, and public officials can use to shape the area’s arts and culture ecosystem and contribute to a vibrant and prosperous future for Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

The Importance of Arts and Culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Charlotte-Mecklenburg is one of the fastest growing communities in the nation. Home to the country’s 15th largest city², the area also hosts the corporate headquarters for various industries, including banking and fintech, as well as multiple higher education institutions. Charlotte’s success in attracting employers is in part due to its vibrant cultural sector, as its uptown neighborhood boasts a high concentration of cultural assets in walking distance from corporate headquarters. Residents and visitors are attracted to the area’s many arts and culture offerings, including visual, performing, literary and media arts experiences, and local creative businesses. The regional cultural sector

serves audiences of more than one million per year and employs thousands of workers, each of whom help generate a major annual economic impact³. As the City of Charlotte has grown and attracted increasingly diverse residents, there is a strong desire to strengthen arts and culture throughout the region for the benefit of all who live, work, or visit here.

Numerous recent community studies and plans reflect the significance of arts and culture to community life in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. These reports include the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the ASC Cultural Equity Report, the City of Charlotte Corridors of Opportunity Recommendations Report, and the Business Realities of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Creative Economy⁴. These plans acknowledge the key role arts and culture plays in Charlotte-Mecklenburg in advancing quality of life by creating more vibrant neighborhoods, generating pathways for economic mobility, and bolstering economic resilience in the community.

²<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/charlotte-nc-population>

³Americans for the Arts’ 2017 Arts & Economic Prosperity IV Report

⁴A full list of reports consulted for this plan is in the State of Culture Report.

Key themes from Charlotte-Mecklenburg's other planning efforts, relevant to the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan, are:



Charlotte-Mecklenburg is rapidly growing and diversifying, and economic and racial disparities exist. The phenomena of the “arc” and the “wedge” which is currently shifting, is indicative of ongoing inequities, historically linked to racial segregation⁵.



Cultural equity continues to be a goal as Charlotte-Mecklenburg strives to be a progressive 21st-century city with livable neighborhoods and strong connectivity.



Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture assets contribute to its vision⁶ to remain 'America's Queen City' and its aspiration to be a leader in arts and culture tourism. These cultural assets drive the community's economic development goals and contribute to continued development and growth.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg's creative ecosystem is made up of many layers, each of which rely on and support each other. As it has done with its successful business and community development planning, Charlotte-Mecklenburg seeks to harness its strengths in the arts and culture sector to provide opportunities for its communities to grow and thrive. This plan builds upon the extensive research and analysis included in the State of Culture Report⁷, presented to the public in February 2023 and available on the City of Charlotte website. That report provides additional detail and context for this document.

Additionally, many national studies show the benefits of arts and culture in a variety of sectors beyond the arts and culture ecosystem. The Americans for the Arts Social Impact Explorer, cited elsewhere in this plan (see pages 21 and 25) provides extensive data demonstrating the benefits of arts and culture pertaining to a wide variety of sectors including economic development, health, and education⁸. Americans for the Arts also notes that the arts are fundamental to our humanity, fostering empathy and beauty⁹. The philanthropic collective Artplace America noted the benefits for workforce recruitment, hiring, and advancement¹⁰. The 2023 New York Times best selling book *Your Brain on Art*, about the science of neuroaesthetics, offers proof for how our brains and bodies transform when we participate in the arts. Arts and culture are also a vital pathway for economic mobility in communities, generating significant of economic activity. In 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, arts and cultural economic activity accounted for 4.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), or \$1.02 trillion¹¹.

Why an Arts and Culture Plan Now?

Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem includes a history of support from the City of Charlotte (city), Mecklenburg County (county), corporations and private foundations, towns, and individual donors and customers, and self-funded artists. However, by 2020, a decades-long decline in workplace giving, shifts in corporate philanthropic philosophies and lagging recovery from economic downturns resulted in significantly reduced revenues to the Arts & Science Council (ASC) and, by extension, reduced funding to arts and culture organizations. The global coronavirus pandemic exacerbated these financial challenges.

The changes in Charlotte-Mecklenburg require a new approach to arts and culture support. The funding model that supported arts and culture for many years, hinging on robust workplace giving, is no longer viable. Furthermore, as Charlotte diversifies and grows, and as funders address historical inequities in support, it is increasingly necessary to ensure equitable distribution of and access to arts and cultural opportunities throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg. To stabilize the sector, the city identified a two-pronged approach:

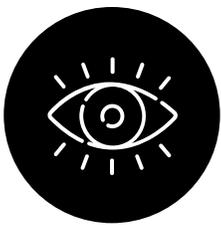
1. The establishment of the Infusion Fund, a three-year initiative spearheaded by the City of Charlotte in partnership with the Foundation For The Carolinas (FFTC) and private donors¹², to sustain local cultural organizations and artists in fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024.
2. The creation of this arts and culture plan, which involved a community-engaged process and provided a blueprint to foster a thriving and sustainable creative ecosystem that benefits all in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

The process was guided by a steering group of 40 community members, including the city's Arts and Culture Advisory Board, to ensure that the future of arts and culture is shaped by diverse voices. The Advisory Board includes representatives from across the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community; half of the board is appointed by Charlotte's mayor and city council, and half of the board is appointed by FFTC on behalf of private sector donors, including one appointment by the ASC.

Additional community members joined the steering group on taskforces to develop the strategies and implementation activities found in this plan. **Ultimately, approximately seventy community voices worked together to develop the plan.**

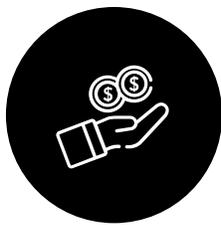
A full list of the steering group members and taskforce members, including the Arts and Culture Advisory Board members, appears in the acknowledgements of this plan. The steering group met monthly throughout the planning process with the City of Charlotte Arts and Culture Officer, a new position created in the Office of the City Manager to lead the work from a city staff perspective. Additional information regarding the Infusion Fund, including its contributors and grantees can be found at <https://www.charlottenc.gov/Streets-and-Neighborhoods/Activities-Culture/Arts-and-Culture> What is an Arts and Culture Plan?

An arts and culture plan allows municipalities, funders, practitioners, and consumers to prioritize community needs around arts and culture and deploy cultural resources in the service of community. The broad goals of this plan are to:



VISION

Define a shared, long-range community vision for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.



FUNDING

Identify sustainable funding sources for a healthy arts and culture sector.



TOURISM

Increase recognition of arts and culture as key to economic development and cultural tourism in the 21st century.



CITY

Strengthen the culturally rich neighborhoods that make Charlotte-Mecklenburg a unique and vibrant city/county.



FUTURE

Design a blueprint for a healthy, sustainable, and thriving cultural future for Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

⁵ <https://charlotte.axios.com/320247/analysis-charlottes-longstanding-crescent-and-wedge-narrative-is-crumbling/>

⁶ <https://www.charlottenc.gov/City-Government/Leadership/City-Manager/Citys-Vision-and-Mission>

⁷ https://www.charlottenc.gov/files/sharedassets/city/streets-and-neighborhoods/documents/arts/state-of-culture-report_web.pdf

⁸ <https://ww2.americansforthearts.org/explorer>

⁹ <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/naappd/10-reasons-to-support-the-arts-in-2021>

¹⁰ <https://www.artplaceamerica.org/workforce-development>

¹¹ <https://www.bea.gov/news/2023/arts-and-cultural-production-satellite-account-us-and-states-2021>

¹² Infusion Fund partners include: Albemarle Foundation; Ally Financial; Atrium Health; Bank of America; Barings; C.D. Spangler Foundation/National Gypsum; The Centene Charitable Foundation; Childress Klein Properties; Coca-Cola Consolidated; Deloitte; Duke Energy; EY; Fifth Third Bank; Foundation For The Carolinas; The Gambrell Foundation; Deidre and Clay Grubb; Honeywell; JELD-WEN, Inc.; John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; LendingTree Foundation; Lowe's Companies, Inc.; Leslie and Michael Marsicano; Jane and Hugh McColl; Moore & Van Allen; Novant Health; Nucor Corporation; PNC Bank; Premier, Inc.; PwC; Red Ventures; Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A.; Rodgers Builders; Jane and Nelson Schwab; Trane Technologies; Truist and Wells Fargo.

Economic Impact of Arts and Culture

Just as the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan was completed, the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6), an economic and social impact study conducted by Americans for the Arts, was released. The following is excerpted from *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6: The Economic & Social Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations & Their Audiences in Mecklenburg County*, a report produced by Americans for the Arts and, in Mecklenburg County, in partnership with the Arts & Science Council. This study is conducted approximately every five years to gauge the economic impact (on employment, government revenue, and household income) of spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and the event-related spending by their audiences. The study does not include individual artists/creatives and for profit creative businesses, which also drives additional economic impact. The AEP6 shared that Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s nonprofit arts and culture industry generated \$453.8 million in economic activity in 2022—\$217.9 million in spending by arts and culture organizations and an additional \$235.9 million in event-related expenditures by their audiences. That economic activity supported 6,815 jobs, provided \$328.0 million in personal income to residents, and generated \$81.4 million in tax revenue to local, state, and federal governments.

These findings make clear:

- Nonprofit arts and culture organizations are businesses. They employ people locally, purchase supplies and services from nearby businesses, and engage in the marketing and promotion of their cities and regions. Their very act of doing business—creating, presenting, and exhibiting art, engaging participants—has a positive economic impact. In Mecklenburg County, nonprofit arts and culture organizations spent an estimated \$217.9 million which supported 3,884 jobs and generated \$48.2 million in local, state, and federal government revenue.
- Arts and culture drives commerce to local businesses. When people attend a cultural event, they often make an outing of it—dining at a restaurant, paying for parking or public transportation, enjoying dessert after the show, and returning home to pay for child or pet care. Overall, in Mecklenburg County, attendees spend \$43.36 per person per event, beyond the cost of admission. These dollars represent vital income for local merchants and a value-add.
- Arts and culture strengthens the visitor economy. In Mecklenburg County, 33.0% of attendees are nonlocal visitors who traveled from outside Mecklenburg County; they spend an average of \$61.27. Additionally, 70.3% of nonlocal attendees reported that the primary purpose of their visit was specifically to attend the performance, event, exhibit, venue, or facility where they were surveyed.
- A vibrant arts and culture community keeps local residents—and their discretionary dollars—in the community. When attendees were asked what they would have done if the event where they were surveyed had not been available, 44.0% of attendees who live in Mecklenburg County said they would have “traveled to a different community to attend a similar arts or cultural activity.”
- Arts and culture organizations contribute to community pride in Mecklenburg County. 88.7% of arts and culture attendees agree that the activity or venue where they were surveyed “*is inspiring a sense of pride in this neighborhood or community,*” 81.9% agree that “*I would feel a great sense of loss if this activity or venue were no longer available,*” and 78.7% agree that the venue or facility where they were surveyed is “*an important pillar for me within my community.*”



ESTIMATED

\$217.9 million

in spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations

SUPPORTED

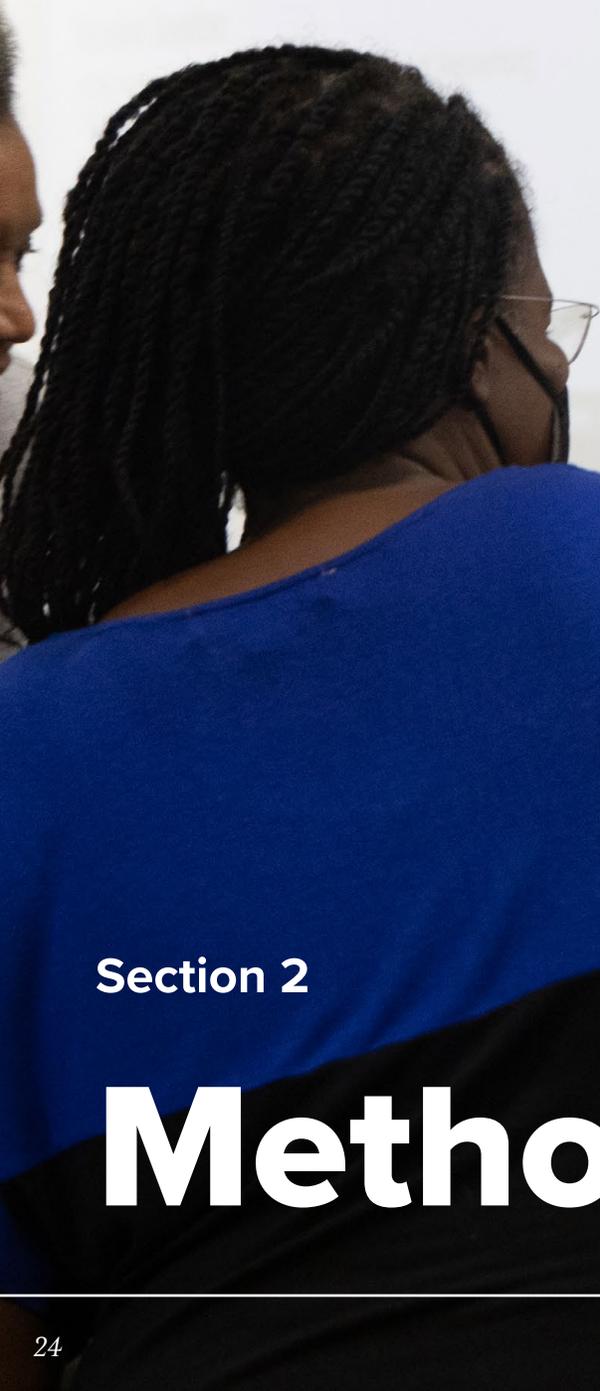
3,884 jobs

GENERATED

\$48.2 million

in local, state, and federal government revenue

The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan sets a path to harness even more growth across the community.



Section 2

Methodology

Sector workshop Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan

2. Methodology

The three-phased process was designed to ensure that the plan is comprehensive, inclusive, and achievable.



- Project Management Planning
- Research and Analysis/Market Overview of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Cultural Landscape
- Start-up Meeting and Tour
- Preliminary Stakeholder Workshop with Existing Arts and Cultural Organizations
- Public Engagement and Communications Strategy
- Cultural Amenities and Facilities Infrastructure Analysis/Asset Map
- Funding Evaluation
- Cultural Trends and Comparables Assessment
- Presentation and Discussion of Preliminary SWOT Analysis

- Countywide Meetings
- Online Survey of Cultural Participation
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Toolkit Distribution
- Ambassador Support
- Focus Groups/Sector-Focused Workshops
- Community Conversations
- Neighborhood/Intercept Events
- Municipal Roundtables
- Presentation and Discussion: State of Culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

- Draft Arts and Culture Plan
- Potential Funding Models and Governance Structures
- Strategy Development and Implementation Workshops
- Testing Workshops
- Final Arts and Culture Plan

By, With, and For Us: **An Inclusive, Collaborative Process**

Phase 1: Opportunities Assessment

The planning team for this arts and culture plan consisted of Lord Cultural Resources, working with Fourth Economy and Civility Localized. In Phase 1 of the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan, the team conducted research and analysis of any existing plans that would intersect with the work of this process, engaged with preliminary stakeholders to begin to understand current gaps and opportunities, and developed a project management plan, as well as a public engagement and communications strategy. This phase culminated in a presentation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges faced by Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture community.

Phase 2: Public Engagement

An essential component of the arts and culture planning process is understanding the perspectives of the public in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The input of arts and culture organizations and artists at the Preliminary Stakeholder Workshop on June 22, 2022, informed the design of the process. Phase 2 of the planning process engaged various communities to collect data about the successes, opportunities, and challenges of experiencing and creating arts and culture in the area. Ultimately, this process yields a shared vision for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg — one that these communities can participate in achieving.

The process engaged a spectrum of voices from across the Charlotte-Mecklenburg population through countywide meetings, workshops focused on specific arts and culture sectors and topics, stakeholder interviews, city and county staff roundtables, neighborhood/drop-in events, ambassador outreach, an online survey assessing residents’ participation in local culture, and do-it-yourself conversations that residents hosted using a conversation guide. Through myriad engagement opportunities, participants provided input in ways most comfortable for them. For example, the team attended at community events

and festivals to meet and talk with people who otherwise may not have been aware of the planning process.

The engagement strategy sought to balance the objectives of cultural consumers, producers, and supporters and ensure that a variety of perspectives shape the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan.

Working in collaboration with the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan’s steering group — comprised of more than 40 volunteers from across many sectors and disciplines in the community — the team organized several methods of input from the community, which culminated in these findings.

Phase 3: Vision, Strategy and Implementation

Using the findings from the two previous phases, Phase 3 focused on developing an implementation strategy for the priorities identified following the State of Culture Report and feedback. Eight taskforces developed the priorities into strategies and actions, with associated timelines, leaders, partners, cost estimates and outcomes, to accomplish the priorities.



Public engagement included:



Countywide Meetings



Community Ambassadors



Digital Communication and Outreach



Stakeholder Interviews



Online Survey of Cultural Participation



Community Conversations and DIY Tool Kits



Neighborhood/Drop-In Events



Sector Workshops

Cultural Asset Inventory and Map

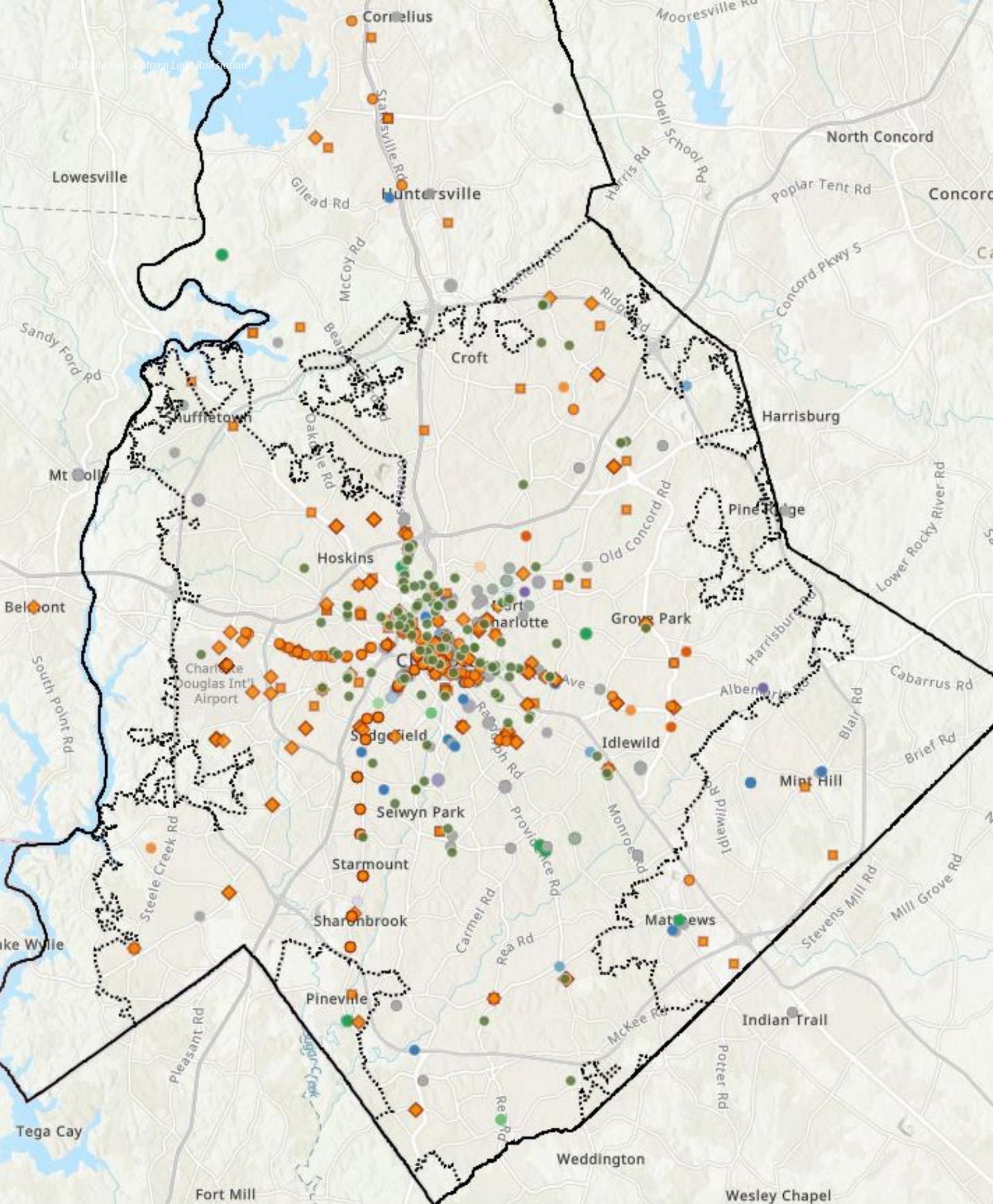
Through a variety of data collection methods, the team developed an inventory of Charlotte-Mecklenburg cultural amenities, including creative sector assets, known arts and culture facilities, public art locations, and city and county placemaking sites. The inventory was then transferred to a GIS-based cultural asset map that includes layers of economic and demographic data. The key findings of the cultural asset inventory and map is detailed in the State of Culture Report (February 2023).

1. Public art (400)
2. Art in Transit (200)
3. City Placemaking (137)
4. Performing arts/theater/dance/opera (67)
5. Visual arts (48)
6. Nonprofit (41)
7. Arts education (33)
8. Independent creative (31)
9. Festival/presenting (30)
10. Gallery space (26)
11. Museum, zoo or exhibition space (22)
12. Folk, craft and traditional arts (19)
13. Studio/working space (18)
14. Performance space (16)
15. Heritage or historical site (15)
16. Motion picture/television/film (13)
17. Music, sound, radio (12)
18. Retail (7)
19. Design (including marketing) (6)
20. Literature (6)
21. Software/technology/new Media (5)
22. Supply chain/production space (3)
23. Architecture (2)
24. Fashion (1)

NEARLY
1,000
 cultural assets

CULTURAL AMENITIES
MORE THAN
50 ▲
 in Uptown

FEWER THAN
30 ▼
 arts and culture assets
 in Charlotte's Corridors
 of Opportunity



Benchmarking and Funding Evaluation

Report Review

To ensure the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan builds from and reflects recent and ongoing planning efforts, the process began with a thorough literature review of prior planning efforts and current implementation processes taking place in Charlotte and in Mecklenburg County. A full list of the reports and plans reviewed can be found in the State of Culture Report.

Learning From Comparable Communities

The research team evaluated several comparable communities to understand how they support, govern and fund arts and culture, and what models, best practices and lessons may be applied in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Six peer communities were benchmarked against Charlotte-Mecklenburg in several key data indicators, including economic and population growth, total employment and population size, housing affordability, and arts and culture sector employment. The benchmarked communities are (listed as city-county for comparison of data against Charlotte-Mecklenburg):

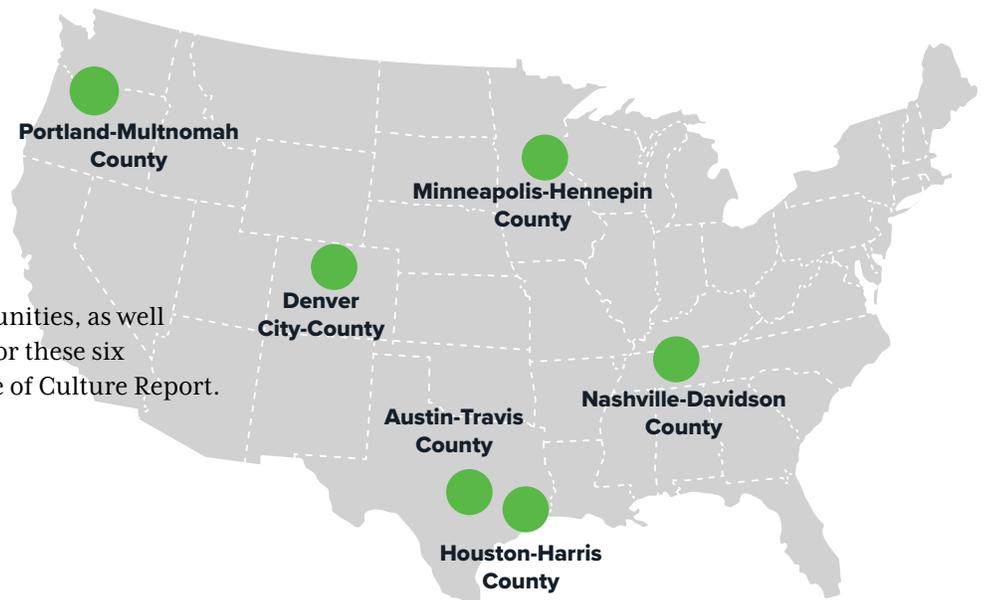
- Austin-Travis County
- Houston-Harris County
- Denver City-County
- Minneapolis-Hennepin County
- Nashville-Davidson County
- Portland-Multnomah County

The methodology to select these communities, as well as economic and demographic trends for these six communities can be viewed in the State of Culture Report.

Funding Evaluation

To better understand how arts and culture is supported in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the team assessed the funding landscape over time. This helped evaluate the value, quality, reach and impact of recent arts and culture funding. This assessment was performed through:

- Interviews with a sampling of funders, artists, and arts and culture organizations
- Desktop research into the stated priorities and impact goals of funders
- A review of available grant proposals to understand location, type of funded organizations and equity in funding
- A profile of city and county funding for arts and culture over the last 10 years



The Choice

Morri Creech



What chose us? Just as well to ask what chose
the chinaberry and wild olive and close-
cropped weeds in the friend's yard where we met
on the noise and traffic of whatever street
had brought us there. Wind made the pattern of
the yellow sun dress you were wearing move
a little, in a larceny that took
possession of the light and made me look

You spoke. Or else I did. The past is fiction.
But I can say whatever dereliction
of purpose conjoined us together here
in these orange-brown hours. And as every year
we choose it as our own again tonight
beneath the lucid tyranny of starlight.



Section 3

Philosophy and Vision



3. Philosophy and Vision

The overarching philosophy and vision of this plan are below along with a summary of the eight priorities for this plan, followed by more detail about each priority.

Philosophy

Arts and culture are essential to our community.

Through arts and culture, we come to know and understand each other. We appreciate our pasts and build a better future together. Through arts and culture, our daily lives vault from existing to thriving.

Arts and culture are vital, and we do not take them for granted. Every person deserves to experience creativity and cultural enrichment. Together, we must cultivate arts, culture, and creativity for everyone.

Vision

A community where all people value, support, and thrive through arts, culture, and creativity.

Eight priorities form the backbone of this plan. These priorities evolved following the State of Culture Report and presentation, in which emerging insights (and all the data, research and analysis on which they were based) were shared with the public. These insights were refined, with the steering group, into priorities. Connecting these priorities is an overarching philosophy and vision for the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan.



*ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

**LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Section 4

Priorities and Strategies

4. Priorities and Strategies

Each priority of this priority of this plan is made up of strategies to achieve it. Strategies and the action steps in the following chapter were developed by taskforces of diverse leaders from arts and culture and other sectors throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg, working together.

In roughly four months, more than 70 dedicated leaders from throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg worked on eight taskforces to develop the priorities of the plan into strategies and actions of the plan. These taskforces identified multiple strategies – tactical, specific activities with timelines – to realize each priority.

The taskforces were chaired by steering group members and included artists, leaders in arts organizations, business, philanthropy and government representatives. Taskforces ensured that each priority was thoroughly defined and actionable and then the strategies will be shared with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community and the consultants will include feedback from the community in the final plan.

Taskforce members met numerous times, reviewed hundreds of pages of public input, research from the cultural planning team, and met with the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan Steering Group to collaborate around their priority.

The strategies offered here are distinct yet broad enough to apply in a fast-changing environment, one that will evolve and advance over the course of the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan's implementation. Strategies are derived from citywide engagement, ambassador conversations in neighborhoods, comments contributed through emails and social media, individual interviews with stakeholders from all sectors, global expertise and best practices, sector workshops across different disciplines and topics in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and input from leadership across Charlotte-Mecklenburg's public, non-profit, and private sectors.

As new stakeholders emerge, new opportunities should be considered to implement these strategies. Therefore, the plan's strategies are to be regarded as components in a roadmap that will resonate across the spectrum of arts and cultural communities – artists, audiences, civic leaders, funders, and organizations.



PRIORITY 1

Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

Funding is arguably the biggest concern for most stakeholders who provided input for this report. In identifying a sustainable funding source or sources, many stakeholders pointed to the critical role of public investment in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Numerous data-supported positive outcomes stem from increased investment in arts and culture and would benefit all in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, not just those who consider themselves “fans” of arts and culture. Americans for the Arts has created a Social Impact Explorer tool¹⁴ that offers many studies with extensive data demonstrating the benefits of the arts in areas as diverse as health and wellness, the environment, community cohesion, aging, tourism, innovation, and transportation. Additionally, creative work in the private sector is growing – sustained, reliable investment would make it even stronger.

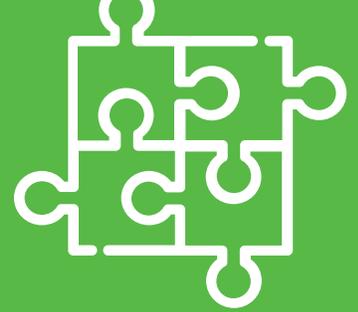
Investment in arts and culture results in future gains for all. For example, creative businesses contribute to economic development and prosperity in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The efforts of the City of Charlotte’s Placemaking Hub – resulting in a variety of public art projects – makes many neighborhoods more vibrant. Collaborations between artists and the county’s public schools have enriched the lives of countless students and their families.

Finally, philanthropy is essential to funding arts and culture. While corporate and philanthropic funders/partners set their own priorities, this plan provides the opportunity and vehicle to coordinate public and private sector priorities to reach shared goals and achieve broader impact.

Strategies

- 1 Secure significant, ongoing public sector support – primarily ongoing, annual support from the city and county, with supplemental support from state, regional, and national sources.
- 2 Foster ongoing/increasing private financial participation.
- 3 Build organizational development capabilities.
- 4 Build capacity of organizations and artists/creatives to develop sustainable revenue models appropriate to their respective operating models (nonprofit, for profit, individual). (See Priority 2 re: coordination and implementation of arts and culture plan priorities).

¹⁴ <https://ww2.americansforthearts.org/explorer>



PRIORITY 2

The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

Beginning with the ongoing governance, support and maintenance of city-owned arts and culture facilities, the City of Charlotte has assumed a leadership role by investing in outstanding arts and culture facilities in the center city area. The corporate and philanthropic community, along with residents, are looking to the public sector to lead with clarity regarding the role of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture sector.

The public sector — government — is charged with the responsibility of representing and serving the people of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Through this process, it’s become clear that residents want equitable access to arts and culture experiences and resources, such as funding and space. Ensuring sustained leadership, management, and coordination of the arts and culture sector on a scale and capacity equipped to address the myriad needs of Charlotte-Mecklenburg is seen as a primary responsibility of the public sector.

Strategies

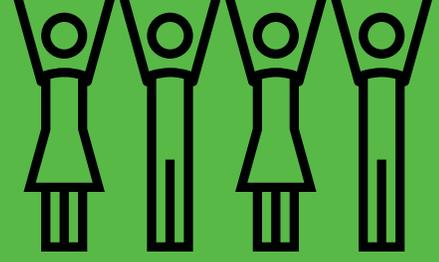
- 1 Establish and implement a joint, public-private governance structure focused on cultivating a sustainable, thriving arts and culture ecosystem in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
- 2 Ensure and coordinate ongoing delivery of equitable, accessible, and inclusive funding and services to/for the arts and culture sector.
- 3 Shift the decision-making for funding and the direction of the arts and culture sector to be more inclusive and transparent.

What can Public Sector Leadership Look Like?

In comparable municipalities, public sector leadership in arts and culture can include:

- Direct operational and programmatic grants to arts and culture organizations
- Connecting arts and culture entities to technical assistance and other non-monetary resources and support
- Commissioning/managing public art and placemaking programs, including maintenance, conservation, and removal
- Addressing issues of equity
- Contributing to public-private facilities’ funds to provide access to affordable arts and culture space

These functions create vibrant, high-quality experiences for residents and visitors alike, as well as advance equity and access and encourage private sector support of the ecosystem.



PRIORITY 3

Equitable, accessible and inclusive support, and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining ALAANA¹⁵, LGBTQIA+¹⁶, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

While Charlotte-Mecklenburg offers arts and culture experiences to everyone in the region — such as Broadway shows at the Blumenthal — stakeholders said that local artists need to be better nurtured, resourced, and recognized as well. The diversity and volume of local creative talent in Charlotte-Mecklenburg is deep and wide, but many feel there is not enough local awareness about just how rich the talent pool is. This was particularly emphasized in terms of local theater, though the need to support local artists in all disciplines was repeatedly noted.

There is palpable frustration regarding the limited economic resources available for local arts and culture organizations, institutions and individual artists. There is a demand to address issues created by a shrinking donor pool, decreased emphasis on the arts by the corporate philanthropic sector and perceived inequities in the allocation of equitable public funding. Private funders could help fill this gap. Current strong support from the corporate sector is often geared toward artists and programs that are nationally focused, rather than artists and cultural organizations living, working, and/or based in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Strategies

- 1 As part of the new governance process, ensure that equity goals are defined and progress is regularly evaluated and reported by an external auditing body.
- 2 Create an ecosystem of funding to support artists and arts and culture organizations at multiple levels or tiers; tiers may be based on the organization's budget size.
- 3 Provide an application and a grant process designed to engage and attract artists and organizations who traditionally are underrepresented in funding awards to apply for grants.
- 4 Growth Fund: Create resource (funding and training) pathways for individual artists and small, mid-size, and grassroots organizations to advance with mentoring, guidance, and assistance.

¹⁵ ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

¹⁶ LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.



PRIORITY 4

Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

It is overwhelmingly clear that limited access to space to create and experience arts and culture is hampering Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture sector. Lacking access is limiting opportunities to attract creative industries, audiences, residents, and tourists. Publicly owned facilities are limited and restrictive due to cost and location. The spaces that are available present environmental challenges – from the size of spaces to the need to address deteriorating conditions in the spaces. There is widespread frustration across the sector specifically about the lack of performance facilities in the area that can be used by both arts and culture producers and the public.

The growth of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s creative industries, like the film industry, is hindered by its lack of appropriate spaces to create and present. Artists in various disciplines said they had trouble finding affordable living or studio spaces as their neighborhoods are developed and they are priced out. Overall, there is a positive attitude about the possibility of reimagining existing spaces so that they are more accessible to multiple artistic experiences, inclusive of all types of art, and inclusive of small and large organizations.

Strategies

- 1 Partner with city/county/private businesses to 1) convert vacant spaces into multidisciplinary art centers and 2) identify/incentivize the creation of arts districts inclusive of all forms of art for creation/rehearsal/practice/display and experience.
- 2 Partner with developers and corporations to intentionally build, renovate, incorporate, and operate multidisciplinary art spaces into new construction and existing buildings for practice/ rehearsal/creation/display and experience.
- 3 Prioritize local artist access and affordability to city-/county-owned public art and non-traditional art spaces (i.e., libraries, schools, parks, houses of faith, etc.).



PRIORITY 5

Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.

Access continues to be a major barrier to experiencing arts and culture in communities throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg. There are stark differences in arts and culture experiences across Charlotte-Mecklenburg due to transportation, cost of participation, and location of venues. Although there are opportunities for free and reduced-price arts and cultural experiences, there is little awareness about how to access those opportunities. This is true for both organizations and individuals. Many areas with less access are within the boundaries of the City's Corridors of Opportunity, presenting a keen avenue for leadership in providing arts access in these areas.

In the cities benchmarked in the State of Culture report, arts and culture is considered a quality-of-life function. In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, quality of life organizations and the facilities in which they are located — parks, recreation centers, libraries, etc. — are largely operated by the county. This presents a tremendous opportunity for the county to equitably provide access to arts and culture in existing facilities across the area.

Strategies

- 1 Provide tickets and transportation to arts and cultural events.
- 2 Enable cross-cultural shared collaborations, shared experiences throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg and an abundance of diverse, local creative work throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
- 3 Ensure the resources exist in neighborhoods and communities throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg whereby creatives at all levels are encouraged and supported.



PRIORITY 6

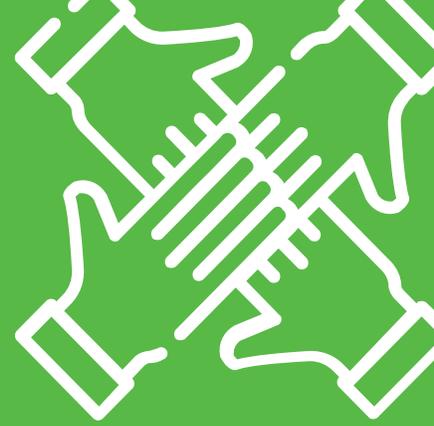
Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

The presence of arts and culture throughout the area is challenged by a lack of coordinated communication and marketing around arts and culture activities. This includes experiences, opportunities, and education. Producers and consumers are looking for clear, accessible information to learn about events, find collaborators, attract audiences, and access resources.

Given the larger context of today's current media landscape, a first step towards improving awareness is robust market research to better understand the local perceptions of arts and culture. This research can then form the basis for a comprehensive and collaborative communications plan to benefit the entire arts and culture sector.

Strategies

- 1** Conduct qualitative and quantitative market research in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to understand:
 - Attitudes of non-participants toward the arts and motivating factors for arts and culture participation.
 - Extent of support by participants and reasons for support (or lack thereof).
 - Perceptions of the value of a vibrant arts and culture ecosystem in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.
- 2** Create, implement, and maintain a comprehensive Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture communication plan with revised branding, marketing, and messaging, including social media hashtags or other mediums, in conjunction with the Charlotte Regional Visitor Authority and other regional partners to encourage increased local participation in arts and culture.



PRIORITY 7

Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture future can be bright—if well-coordinated and resourced. The sector has the necessary nascent infrastructure, including post-secondary programs, growing creative industries, and the willing ear of the public sector. To leverage these opportunities for growth — especially growth of the arts and culture infrastructure — collaboration within the arts and culture community and among other sectors is key.

This collaboration is happening in small ways but can be accelerated through mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, healthcare organizations, transportation systems, and education providers. While

some organizations are already pursuing collaborative efforts, stakeholders expressed a desire to see even more collaboration to strengthen the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture community. They want to see more opportunities for networking and collaboration across the sector, to build audiences and to expand the reach of arts across the area. Americans for the Arts Social Impact Explorer provides extensive data on the many benefits of the arts in sectors such as education, health, workforce development and more. Every resident of Charlotte-Mecklenburg can benefit from greater integration of arts and culture throughout the community.

Strategies

- 1 Incentivize and enable cross-sector collaborations through funding and technical support.
- 2 Build capacity for collaborations across the sector.



PRIORITY 8

Expand arts education experiences — early childhood to lifelong learners — for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, robust workforce development, and the retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

Enriching arts and cultural experiences come in many forms throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Paramount for the development of artists, patrons, and the infrastructure to support a thriving arts and culture sector is exposure to the arts beginning at an early age. Across the country, arts education has been cited as conducive to increased student retention, higher graduation rates and numerous other positive outcomes. The arts, as connected to STEAM, is a major skill set of interest to local funders and can be leveraged to grow Charlotte-Mecklenburg's workforce. More science, technology, engineering, arts, and math programs should be offered and supported.

Supporters also need to understand the inherent innovation that is integral to making art.

As documented in the State of Culture Report¹⁸, there is a need to strengthen arts in K-12 and the arts community in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. More arts education experiences can grow from existing higher education partnerships and assets. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools already feature promising collaborations that can be, such as projects with the Mint Museum, its roster of local artists partners and its artist residency program.

Strategies

- 1** Articulate and advocate for the value of arts education across all demographic sectors.
- 2** Strengthen arts education in all pre-K-12 schools — public, private, and charter.
- 3** Increase support for arts teachers and teaching artists through increased funding, leveraging community partnerships and professional development opportunities.
- 4** Fortify and expand educational programming from local arts organizations.
- 5** Create pathways for people to become professional artists, entrepreneurs, and business owners within the creative sectors.

¹⁷ <https://ww2.americansforthearts.org/explorer>

¹⁸ https://www.charlottenc.gov/files/sharedassets/city/streets-and-neighborhoods/documents/arts/state-of-culture-report_web.pdf

Section 5

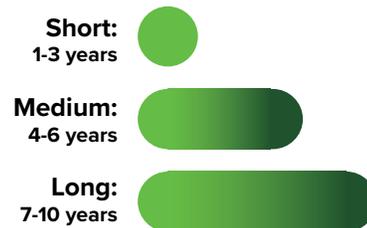
Implementation Guide

5. Implementation Guide

This Implementation Guide was developed by the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan’s taskforces. It outlines specific actions through which — as a community — we can achieve the priorities and strategies in the plan.

The implementation plans focus on four main components:

A. Timeframe: Each action under the strategy is given an estimated timeframe for initiation based on prioritized need for Short (one to three years), Medium (four to six years), and Long (seven to 10 years) term execution. In the individual task timeframes, we have highlighted the initiation of the task in light green and the time in which we estimate it will take to complete the task is shown in dark green.



B. Leadership and potential partners: Specific entities in Charlotte-Mecklenburg were identified as necessary to the implementation of these strategies. Linkage between certain priorities and strategies is indicated by an icon.

C. Outcomes: The outcomes listed under each strategy begin to identify metrics for evaluating achievement of the strategy.

D. Cost estimates: The cost estimates attributed to these individual actions in total under each strategy are presented in one to five-dollar sign range and are indicated over the life of the 10-year plan.



PRIORITY #1 **Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.**

STRATEGY 1 *Secure significant, ongoing public sector support — primarily ongoing, annual support from the city and county, with supplemental support from state, regional, and national sources.*

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Work with local business organizations to develop plan for securing additional public funding. \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte Executive Leadership Council • Charlotte Regional Business Alliance • Arts and Culture Advisory Board leadership • Philanthropic leaders • Private sector leaders • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • CMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mecklenburg County Towns • Artists • Arts and culture organizations • Charlotte Regional Visitor's Authority (CRVA) • State entities • Federal entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus on amount and source of public sector funds • Annual, stable, budget allocations to support arts and culture from public sector entities
2. Collaborate with state and federal elected officials and organizations to identify and secure funding. \$ \$						
3. Secure commitment for sustainable local public sector funding. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$						

PRIORITY #1

Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

STRATEGY 2

Foster ongoing/increasing private financial participation.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
<p>1. Foster support by the private sector including but not limited to operational support, corporate sponsorships, capital, endowments, planning, and policy development.</p> <p>Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and Culture Advisory Board leadership • Public sector leaders • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte Regional Business Alliance • Foundation For The Carolinas (FFTC) • Charlotte Executive Leadership Council • Corporations and businesses of all sizes • Trade organizations and business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of future role of the private sector in supporting the arts and culture ecosystem in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. • The arts and culture sector is perceived as critical component of economic growth. • Ongoing support for and increasing engagement with arts and culture that reflects community and economic growth.
<p>2. Support artists/creatives and organizations through earned revenue streams and engagements.</p> <p>Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ</p>						



PRIORITY #1

Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

STRATEGY 3

Build organizational development capabilities.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Prioritize the hiring and training of development staff at organizations (for support). \$ \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional development staff at organizations • Groups receiving public resources continue to develop their fundraising capabilities and staffs to make their organizations stronger; this in turn strengthens the entire system.
2. Create technical assistance programs for organizations. \$ \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller or emerging groups without the resources to employ full-time development staff in the short term could be supported through a shared services or collective model to help them grow.
3. Assess, develop, launch, and complete capital and endowment campaign(s), providing professional expertise to organizations regarding campaign feasibility and strategy. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and Culture Advisory Board leadership • City of Charlotte • Philanthropic entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFTC • Mecklenburg County • Charlotte Executive Leadership Council (CELC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased individual giving as a share of overall revenue for organizations. • Slate of capital projects and endowments for support with developed scopes of work and phased implementation.
4. Identify funds from new funding source(s) to support development staff at organizations. \$ \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational sustainability through strong fundraising and endowments.



PRIORITY #1

Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

STRATEGY 4

Build capacity of organizations and artists/creatives to develop sustainable revenue models appropriate to their respective operating models (nonprofit, for profit, individual). (See Priority 2 re: coordination and implementation of arts and culture plan priorities).

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Identify business incubators that have capacity and expertise to develop curriculum for small arts organizations and individual artists. \$						
2. Secure grant funds and sponsorships for participants of capacity building programs. \$ \$					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector funders • State of North Carolina • Federal government • Arts and culture organizations • City of Charlotte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop arts and culture specific business curriculum with measurable outcomes.
3. Explore opportunities for operational efficiencies, such as a shared administrative services model. \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governance structure • FFTC • Arts and culture organizations • Creative businesses • Artists/creatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External consultants • Ventureprise (formerly Ben Craig Center): UNC Charlotte • Small business programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model for support of administrative services. • Increased earned revenue as a share of overall revenue.
4. Increase earned revenue by organizations and artists/creatives.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations marketing Charlotte-Mecklenburg (including, but not limited to, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, Arts & Science Council (ASC)) • Peer cities/organizations who have expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity for organizations (non-profit and for profit) and individual artists and creatives.
5. Develop cohort of organizations to share best practices around increasing and sustaining earned revenue. \$						
6. Encourage and support recipients of grants to dedicate a portion of their funds to marketing and communicating their activities. \$						

PRIORITY #2

The public sector must partner with an already active private sector in playing a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

STRATEGY 1

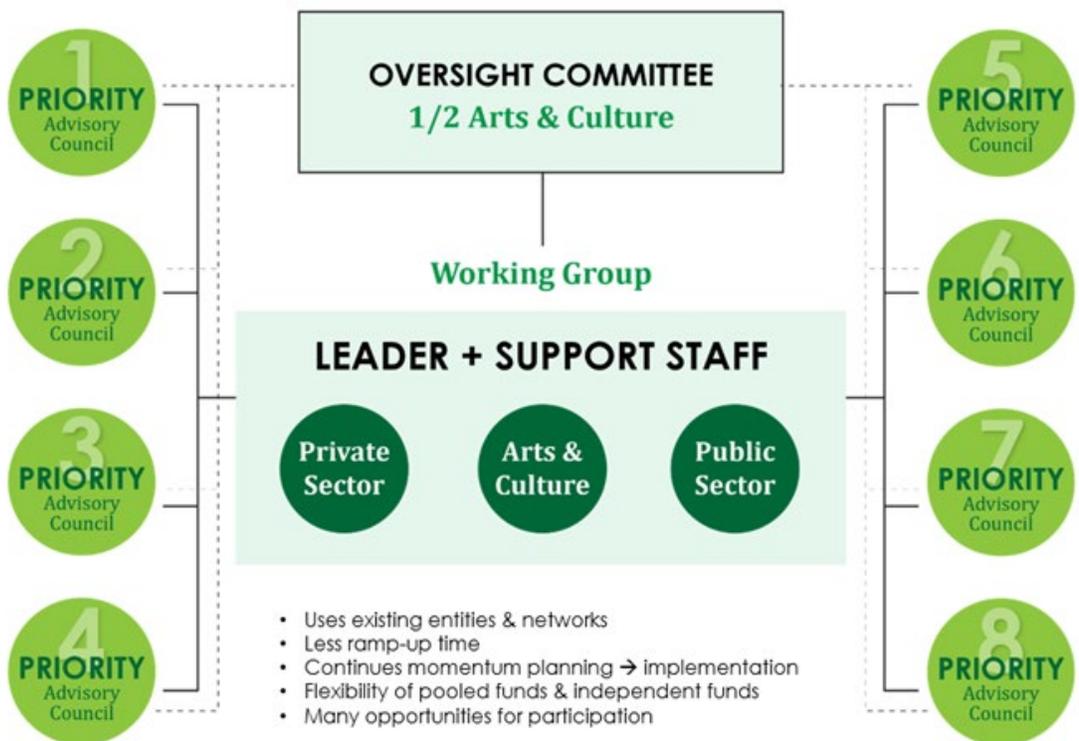
Establish and implement a joint, public-private governance structure focused on cultivating a sustainable, thriving arts and culture ecosystem in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners
1. Establish and maintain an oversight board/committee/council of approximately 12-16 members with representation from public sector entities (including city and county), private sector (business and philanthropy), arts and culture (artists/creatives, nonprofit organizations, and creative businesses), with half of board members coming from arts and culture. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • Charlotte Regional Business Alliance • Foundation For The Carolinas • Local artists/creatives • Local arts and culture organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMS • Charlotte Mecklenburg Library • Artists/creatives • Arts and culture organizations • Private business (small, medium, large) • Partners in other fields/disciplines (such as social sector)
2. Establish and maintain a working group of entities – represented by their senior staff, led by a senior executive, and with appropriate support staff – that drives, monitors, and iterates on implementation of the arts and culture plan; the working group includes key entities necessary for leading successful implementation of the plan from public, private, and arts and culture sectors. 💰💰💰💰					
3. Establish and maintain advisory committees/councils – focused on the priorities of the arts and culture plan – that monitor and advise on implementation and iteration of the plan. These work closely with the working group and the oversight board/committee/council, via representation from the oversight group on each advisory committee/council. Each includes representation from public, private, and arts and culture. 💰					
4. Establish working agreements, processes, and funding to guide and enable the work of the governance structure. 💰					
5. Spearhead and coordinate implementation of the arts and culture plan; regularly evaluate and report on implementation progress; and, work with partners to iterate on the plan as needed. 💰💰💰					

Proposed Public-Private Governance Structure

Outcomes

This graphic illustrates the joint effort and workflow for the proposed public-private governance structure that would be established as a part of the outcomes of this Arts and Culture Plan.



Proposed Governance Structure

Working Group may include senior staff from:

Arts and culture organizations (3-4)
 Charlotte Mecklenburg Library
 Charlotte Regional Business Alliance
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
 City of Charlotte
 Foundation For The Carolinas
 Mecklenburg County



PRIORITY #2

The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

STRATEGY 2
LINKED TO
PRIORITY #3

Ensure and coordinate ongoing delivery of equitable, accessible, and inclusive funding and services to/for the arts and culture sector.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Distribute reliable, ongoing general operating funding to arts and culture organizations. (See other priority areas, including Priority 3). \$ \$ \$ \$ \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local arts and culture organizations experience stability and greater likelihood of sustainability and growth opportunities through reliable general operating support.
2. Establish/provide a range of funding opportunities for artists/creatives, arts and culture project/programs/initiatives, nonprofits and creative businesses, aligned with the arts and culture plan, prioritizing equity. (See other priority areas, including Priority 3). \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight council/committee of governance structure Working Group of governance structure (which includes public, private, and arts and culture sector leadership, per above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artists/creatives City of Charlotte Mecklenburg County CMS Charlotte Mecklenburg Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local artists/creatives, arts and culture organizations, and other arts and culture initiatives will be well resourced and supported to develop to their full potential and have a greater likelihood of successful implementation and achieving positive impact for Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
3. Establish/provide capacity building and professional development programs and support for the arts and culture sector, artists/creatives, and organizations of all types/sizes, prioritizing equity. (See Priority 3 and other priorities in the arts and culture plan). \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory committees/councils of oversight structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business community partners Philanthropic partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local resources and relationships will be complemented and expanded by regional, state, and national (perhaps even international) resources and partners, bringing more resources to Charlotte-Mecklenburg and raising Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s profile.
4. Coordinate with local, regional, state, and national partners across sectors to cultivate the local arts and culture sector and arts and culture opportunities for Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents and visitors in alignment with the vision and strategies in this arts and culture plan (See other priorities in plan). \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts and culture sector organizations and leaders (such as ASC, Charlotte is Creative, and other existing and/or future entities) Equity Auditing body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational/training organizations and providers Local, regional, state, and national partners/entities 	
5. Support stable and effective operations and utilization of city-owned arts and culture facilities. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$						

PRIORITY #2

The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

STRATEGY 3

Shift the decision making for funding and the direction of the arts sector to be more inclusive and transparent.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Provide equity training for leadership within legacy organizations. (Organizations with annual income exceeding \$5M and are 20+ years old e.g ASC, FFTC, Mint Museum, Bechtler Museum, Harvey B. Gantt). 💰💰						
2. Provide an annual public report detailing specific metrics on percentage of diverse leadership, staff, board members, programming, partnerships, funding allocation, and vendors. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity auditing body • Equity advisory committee of the new governance structure • C-Suite executives • Leaders of grassroots organizations • Individual artists and creatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO, COO, CMO, CFO, program directors • Leadership and executive cabinet of organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency in policies, procedures, programming, and funding • Closing gaps in grant-making, funding, and partnerships • Individual artists in intentionally marginalized groups are able to make a sustainable living being artists • More collaboration and opportunities for grassroots organizations and individual artists
3. Provide progressive multi-year, operational funding to grassroots organizations that desire to grow and expand. 💰💰💰💰						
4. Annual idea, process, and/or resource sharing among larger organizations, grassroots organizations, and individual artists (prior to the start of the new fiscal year). 💰						

PRIORITY #3

Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining ALAANA, LGBTQIA+, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

**STRATEGY 1
(LINKED TO PRIORITY 2)**

As part of the new governance process, ensure that equity goals are defined, and progress is regularly evaluated and reported by an external auditing body.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Establish scope of group and ideal representation (to reflect Census percent representation and other sub-groups such as LGBTQ ¹⁹ , people with a range of abilities, women and ALAANA ²⁰ communities). \$				• Equity Auditing Body ²¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading on Opportunity • UNCC Urban Institute • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • Arts & Science Council • Community Building Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group assembled and scope of work determined • Equity goals plan • Community dashboard • Individual yearly audits for identified organizations • Percent of goals complications and risks mitigated
2. Hire full time staff or pay volunteers a stipend to participate on the commission / organization with various backgrounds and sectors who are leaders and experts in the field. \$ \$ \$						
3. Research similar organizations to learn best practices. \$						
4. Lead system alignment of equity goals (what is feasible with limited budgets and capacity). \$						
5. Create metrics for evaluation. Review and update these metrics periodically. \$						
6. Establish an equity dashboard. \$ \$						
7. Serve as a consultant body to conduct equity audits and determine goals for each organization.						
8. Monitor risks and systemic changes that could impact funding or achievement of equity goals. \$						

¹⁹ LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

²⁰ ALAANA: the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

²¹ The Equity Auditing Body is responsible for measuring and monitoring institutions' (organizations with greater than \$250,000 budget) performance-based equity metrics. Ensuring institutions and organizations are using and operating with an equity frame and equity plan. This organization will develop an equity vision and dashboard for the entire sector.

PRIORITY #3

Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining ALAANA, LGBTQIA+, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

STRATEGY 2

Create an ecosystem of funding to support artists and arts and culture organizations at multiple levels or tiers; tiers may be based on the organization’s budget size.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Develop profiles for artists and arts organizations who receive funding in Charlotte. Organizations might be defined by budget or staffing size. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Equity Advisory Committee of the new governance structure²⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASC • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • Funders of the arts • Individual artists • Visual And Performing Arts (VAPA) Center • Charlotte Racial Equity Funders Collaborative • Grassroots arts organizations and others²⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BOOM - Charlotte is Creative - ArtPop - Namaste Artists CLT - Guild of Charlotte Artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arts sector and civic leaders understand the current funding alignment and levels. • The sector understands the funding gaps in our ecosystem and potential approaches for closing the gaps. • The sector develops a strategy and plan for supporting and investing in the improving gaps.
2. Create an arts sector map of funders including their arts focus and the types of organizations they fund. 💰						
3. Identify ecosystem funding gaps. Align funders to the artists groups/tiers to address identified funding gaps. 💰						
4. Decentralize funding infrastructure to support grant making led by grassroots-based arts organizations such as BOOM, Charlotte is Creative, BLKMRKT, etc. 💰💰💰						
5. Report out findings and recommendations to the arts sector including funders and artists. 💰						

²²ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

²³LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

²⁴The Equity advisory committee of the new governance structure will support equitable distribution of funds based on the metrics provided by the auditing body. The Equity Arts Committee is one of the advisory committees of the Priority 2 governance structure.

²⁵The groups listed here represent examples of the types of grassroots arts organizations that will be partners. This list is not intended to be a complete listing of these types of organizations.



PRIORITY #3

Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining ALANA²², LGBTQIA+²³, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

STRATEGY 3

Provide an application and a grant process designed to engage and attract artists and organizations who traditionally are underrepresented in funding awards to apply for grants.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Collect data/feedback on biggest areas of difficulty for individual artists (using previous applicants to Arts and Culture funding). \$	●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Advisory Committee of the new governance structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASC City of Charlotte Mecklenburg County Funders of the arts Charlotte Racial Equity Funders Collaborative Other funders Individual artists (particularly ones not well served or represented by previous processes) Grassroots arts organizations and others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BOOM - Charlotte is Creative - ArtPop - VAPA Center - Namaste Artists CLT - Guild of Charlotte Artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce policies and procedures to improve and increase access to arts funding. Increased number of artist and organizations not traditionally funded applying for grants. Increased amount of money received by artist and organizations not traditionally funded applying for grants. Easy to use grant application and process adopted by funders in the sector. Potentially, create a grant application platform or hub that is used by Charlotte funders and artists applying for grants.
2. Confer with other funders who have tried a similar approach (United Way of Greater Charlotte, Dallas Cultural Plan/Equity Statement & corresponding actions). \$	●					
3. Determine criteria for organizations (large, mid, small; Dallas Cultural Plan/Equity Statement and corresponding actions). \$	●					
4. Determine criteria for individual artists (incorporated versus unincorporated). \$	●					
5. Develop web portal. \$	●					
6. Hire administrative staff. \$	●					
7. Explore uniform application and use of technology among local funders to streamline grant process and increase accessibility for applicants. \$	●					

PRIORITY #3

Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing, and sustaining ALAANA²², LGBTQIA+²³, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

STRATEGY 4

Create Growth Fund: Create resource (funding and training) pathways for individual artists, small, mid-size, and grassroots organizations to advance with mentoring, guidance, and assistance.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Determine criteria for organizations. \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASC • The Equity Advisory Committee²⁴ • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • New governance structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McColl Center • Neighborhood advocate groups (MoRa, etc.) • Public Library • Arts and culture consultants • Grassroots arts organizations and others²⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BOOM - Charlotte is Creative - ArtPop - VAPA Center - Namaste Artists CLT - Guild of Charlotte Artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual artists are equipped with skills and tools for professional/career growth that are healthy, meaningful, and sustainable. • Organizations are equipped with skills and tools to develop necessary and healthy infrastructure while keeping/maintaining their cultural/artistic mission/integrity and can sustainably grow and serve their community.
2. Determine criteria for individual artists. \$ \$ \$						
3. Determine where emerging artists and organizations are at and tailor resources to need. \$ \$ \$						

²² ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

²³ LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

²⁴ The Equity advisory committee of the new governance structure will support equitable distribution of funds based on the metrics provided by the auditing body. The Equity Arts Committee is one of the advisory committees of the Priority 2 governance structure.

²⁵ The groups listed here represent examples of the types of grassroots arts organizations that will be partners. This list is not intended to be a complete listing of these types of organizations.



PRIORITY #4

Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

STRATEGY 1

Partner with city/county/private businesses to 1) convert vacant spaces into multidisciplinary art centers and 2) identify/incentivize the creation of arts districts inclusive of all forms of art for creation/rehearsal/practice/display and experience of art.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Work with city/county/private businesses to identify and convert vacant spaces for possible temporary and/or long-term use rather than tear down or remain completely empty. Ensure that they are usable as creation/rehearsal/display, live/workspace, and experience spaces. \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte • Charlotte Ballet • VAPA Center • McColl Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers • Center City Partners • Charlotte Regional Business Alliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable work, practice/creation, and experience/display spaces for local artists, establishing a permanent location, and long-term planning.
2. Secure lots/land to develop additional spaces throughout the county. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte Art League • ASC • Mecklenburg County • Performing arts organizations and spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses and property owners of all kinds • CMS • Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides economic incentive to developers for arts/culture space enhancing the reputation and livability of Charlotte and North Carolina.
3. Identify diversified funding (grants, incentives, arts district, endowments, gifts, City of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County Public Sector Incentives, block grants, and workforce development grants to support economic development, etc.) to support purchase of spaces. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blumenthal Performing Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts North Carolina 	

PRIORITY #4

Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

STRATEGY 2

Partner with developers and corporations to intentionally build, renovate, incorporate, and operate multidisciplinary art spaces into new construction and existing buildings for practice/rehearsal/creation/display and experiences.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Use corporate lobbies for artists' exhibit spaces. \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte • ASC • Local arts organizations/galleries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mecklenburg County • Developers • Center City Partners • Charlotte Regional Business Alliance • Local business leaders • Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable and respectable spaces to display and curate artistic work that would directly engage artists with the public.
2. Enhance privately-owned public space activation. \$ \$						
3. Increase murals on exterior surfaces. \$ \$ \$						
4. Incentivize corporate contributions to vacant space conversions. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$						
5. Partner with and incentivize developers to include arts and culture creation, practice, and display spaces in new building projects and construction. \$ \$ \$ \$ \$						



PRIORITY #4

Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

STRATEGY 3

Prioritize local artist access and affordability to city-/county-owned public art and non-traditional art spaces (i.e., libraries, schools, parks, houses of faith, etc.).

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. List open spaces in a local database or on a calendar. \$						
2. Market these spaces within the local arts communities. \$						
3. Provide funding (grants, donations, etc.) to cultivate and curate spaces. \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte • ASC • Local arts organizations/galleries • Blumenthal Performing Arts • New governance structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mecklenburg County • Local houses of faith • CMS • Local business leaders • Equity auditing body (see Priority 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritized art spaces and facilities for local artists at affordable rates to display, perform, and curate their work that would directly engage them with the public.
4. Ensure city-/county-owned facilities are available for affordable use by local artists and arts and culture organizations. \$ \$						
5. Encourage cooperative studio and retail spaces for arts entrepreneurs and creatives to build income through their artistic endeavors. \$						



STRATEGY 1

Provide tickets and transportation to arts and cultural events.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
<p>1. Increase free events and free tickets (or steeply discounted) to offerings at city and county-owned facilities, including seasonal offerings.</p> <p>💰 💰 💰 💰</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In first year, 1/3 of Mecklenburg residents benefit from free tickets, and another 1/3 benefit from discounted tickets. • In first year, 25,000 individuals take advantage of free transportation options to 500 arts and culture events. • Over long term, vast majority of Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents experience arts and culture multiple times each year; most residents perceive few-to-no barriers to attending arts and culture offerings in Charlotte-Mecklenburg; nationally known civic pride in Charlotte's creative scene.
<p>2. Leverage philanthropic resources to reduce costs of attending events throughout the city/county and/or underwrite expenses of artists and organizations.</p> <p>💰 💰 💰 💰</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and Culture Support Team(s)²⁶ • Arts organizations; marketing/communications team(s) • Private philanthropy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology companies • Transportation companies (e.g., Uber, Lyft, e-scooters, etc.) • CATS 	
<p>3. Create a free transportation program to arts and culture events.</p> <p>💰 💰 💰 💰</p>						

²⁶ The Arts and Culture Support Team(s) would be formed to support implementation and would include arts and culture organizations and individual artists.

PRIORITY #5 Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.

STRATEGY 2 *Enable cross-cultural shared collaborations, shared experiences throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg and an abundance of diverse, local creative work throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg.*

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Create a directory of Charlotte arts organizations and artists, letting them specify if they're interested in working on cross-cultural collaborations. Those interested can then contact each other through the directory to create new partnerships. \$ \$ \$						
2. Create a mobile arts and culture program to transport creative programming throughout neighborhoods county-wide, ensuring that such a program involves the creation and sharing of authentic cultural experiences versus simply "importing" unsolicited arts and culture offerings. \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte • Neighborhood associations • CATS • Artists/creatives • Arts and culture organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-selected arts and culture organizations • Transportation companies (e.g., Uber, Lyft, e-scooters, etc.) • Mecklenburg County • ASC • City of Charlotte Placemaking program • Private Philanthropy • Technology Companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased/new arts and culture activity at a local level, that brings people together and helps build community pride as well as the easiest possible access to local cultural experiences.
3. Ensure arts and culture experiences are embedded into Charlotte's mobility – e.g., artistic activations at transit stations, urban trails/greenways, and bus stops. \$ \$						
4. Reflect the full range of artistic disciplines and forms practiced in Charlotte-Mecklenburg and increase representation by local artists/creatives in public art. \$ \$						
5. Integrate placemaking and art into existing and future public infrastructure.						
6. Explore and support use of technology to eliminate barriers to access and enable creativity and connection.						

The Arts and Culture Support Team(s) would be formed to support implementation and would include arts and culture organizations and individual artists.

PRIORITY #5 Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.

STRATEGY 3 Support creatives in communities.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
<p>1. Create a community artists' program (pilot in Corridors of Opportunity, then replicate in all other areas) in which artists from those neighborhoods are supported to create community-reflective work, engage with their community, and mentor younger generations of emerging creatives.</p> <p>Ⓢ Ⓢ</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local arts organizations • Community/neighborhood groups • Community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Community Artist program piloted within the Corridors of Opportunity will become a connection between local artists/creatives and their communities. Based on this, community engagement will increase in the Corridors allowing artists to receive opportunities beyond placemaking opportunities. City/county funded facilities like libraries and/or parks and recreation buildings can become grounds for frequent community engagement activities. This access keeps art in our local neighborhoods and will potentially bring more engagement into arts and culture experiences in uptown Charlotte.



PRIORITY #6

Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

STRATEGY 1

Conduct qualitative and quantitative market research in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to understand:

- Attitudes of non-participants toward the arts and motivating factors for arts and culture participation.
- Extent of support by participants and reasons for support (or lack thereof).
- Perceptions of the value of a vibrant arts and culture ecosystem in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. RFP process to define research projects and identify a research partner. 💰	●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Local marketing agencies who understand the community and have deep relations to help track down the appropriate individuals. · New governance structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Business owners · Community and neighborhood associates · Cultural institutions · Local new outlets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Arts & culture consumer demographic mapping – detailed information about obstacles for participating and donation; understanding what type of arts and culture they would engage in. · Road map for next step development of branding and communication strategy. · Road map for cultural institutions and artists to refine their donation campaigns and marketing strategies to increase attendance and donors.
2. Engage market research firms (one for each project). 💰 💰	●					
3. Visit peer cities to understand how they engage non-cultural participants and how they promote individual giving. 💰 💰	●					
4. Local and cultural institutions and artists provide detailed patron demographics so research firm can map where the “participants” live and where the gaps are. 💰	●					
5. Present information to appropriate cultural institutions, elected officials, and corporate donors.	●					



PRIORITY #6

Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

STRATEGY 2

Create, implement, and maintain a comprehensive Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture communication plan with revised branding, marketing, and messaging, including social media hashtags or other mediums, in conjunction with the CRVA and other regional partners to encourage increased local participation in arts and culture and to raise national and international visibility of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture offerings.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Develop RFP (or engage vendor to) find a diverse group of marketing communications agencies to develop a cohesive brand statement including graphics, logos, and hashtags (Local artists will be hired to help create the messaging and materials). \$ \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage corporate communication channels with employees to amplify the arts and cultural ecosystem with the branding language.
2. Develop a cohesive Charlotte Arts and Cultural brand handbook to be distributed widely and used for tourism, economic development, corporate communication, and arts and culture marketing. \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government incentive program for corporations and small businesses that use local artists for murals, artwork, corporate performances, etc.
3. Develop a communication plan outline. (Create an expectation that it is everyone’s responsibility to support the arts).				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts & Culture Advisory Board and Steering Committee 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a public art program to highlight the arts and culture messaging.
4. Develop and implement an annual arts and culture communications plan.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New governance structure CRVA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local news outlets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referenced in Priority #2 and #3 – there needs to be a non-governmental body established to help provide unified support to the arts and culture ecosphere.
5. Develop and implement an annual arts and culture plan media plan/budget. \$						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide grant funding to local media outlets to hire art journalists to promote the ecosphere.
6. Develop a social media plan. \$						
7. Develop a PR plan. \$						
8. Retainer for agency to manage paid media and PR. \$						
9. Annual reviews with marketing research team to see if and how we are moving the needle and tweak messaging as needed.						

PRIORITY #7 Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

STRATEGY 1 *Incentivize and enable cross-sector collaborations within the creative ecosystem and with other sectors (such as healthcare, manufacturing, education, social service, etc.) through funding and technical support.*

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
<p>1. Fund collaborative multiyear initiatives between two or more organizations and/or individual artists that include both access to and presentation of arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, including planning for collaboration.</p> <p>\$\$\$</p>						
<p>2. Midpoint check in-to monitor progress of collaborative initiative and point to next steps. Technical support might include planning, professional development opportunities, networking, administrative support, guidance, media, and dissemination packages.</p> <p>\$</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governance structure • Philanthropic groups • Arts and culture organizations • Individual artists • Conveners • Host and owners of art spaces and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Charlotte • Mecklenburg County • Private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can result in new shared spaces, shared programming, complete experiences for all our audiences, etc. • Projects can become initiatives poised for future national funding and support.
<p>3. Evaluate the impact and progress of the seed funding supported period and technical support to pursue further support beyond local structures.</p> <p>\$</p>						
<p>4. Expand upon existing collaborations among large organizations, small to mid-sized groups, individual artists, and creatives, while creating new ones. Achieved through access to spaces, financial support and compensation, co-development of programming, and other means.</p>						

PRIORITY #7 Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

STRATEGY 2 *Build capacity for collaborations across the sector through networking, infrastructure, and financial resources.*

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
<p>1. Identify key partners who have strong, diverse, well-connected networks and platforms to facilitate potential first steps in collaborations.</p> <p>Ⓢ Ⓢ</p>						
<p>2. Establish a Charlotte/Mecklenburg based network of potential collaborative organizations seeking connections across the field.</p> <p>Ⓢ Ⓢ</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governance structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and culture organizations • Individual artists • Conveners • Host and owners of art spaces and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate and open conversations about ongoing efforts for partnership and collaborations across the sector. • Intentionality for shared resources. • Deliberate attention for economic mobility within the artistic sector.
<p>3. Mentor collaborating organizations to take it beyond preliminary efforts, and encourage deliberate efforts to promote growth and mobility for smaller and grassroots organizations.</p> <p>Ⓢ Ⓢ</p>						



PRIORITY #8

Expand arts education — early childhood to lifelong learners — experiences for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, workforce development, and retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

STRATEGY 1

Articulate and advocate for the value of arts education across all demographic sectors, i.e., all ages, races, gender, ethnicities, geographic locations, etc.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Identify different audiences (policy makers, funders, general public, corporate leaders, education administrators).						<p>Greater understanding of the benefits of arts education and a body of local research that demonstrates the impact of arts education on our citizens, which would lead to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong, fully staffed arts education programs in all schools. 2. Robust, well-funded extracurricular arts education programs for Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents of all ages. 3. A full-time public Arts Education Coordinator who would make connections across different schools, artists, community groups, and organizations to more closely connect the cultural sector and the educational sector, and to serve as chief advocate for arts education.
2. Define arts education, outcomes, skills, etc. and articulate the many benefits of arts education.						
3. Develop marketing campaign/public information campaigns — capitalize on and amplify existing knowledge, efforts, data. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts education leadership in Charlotte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All artists and arts educators in Mecklenburg County 	
4. Identify platforms for messaging. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mecklenburg Schools • ASC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts organizations 	
5. Create messages and materials for all platforms, print and digital. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte is Creative • Arts Impact Charlotte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational program leaders • Arts NC 	
6. Identify and rally “messengers,” advocates who can help communicate. 💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNC Charlotte and other local higher ed institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte arts education supporters/ participants 	
7. Place and promote messages. 💰						
8. Develop local assessments, data pools of impacts of arts education in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. 💰						
9. Establish an Arts Education Coordinator to serve as chief advocate. 💰						
10. Recommend more funding specifically for arts education.						

PRIORITY #8

Expand arts education — early childhood to lifelong learners — experiences for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, workforce development, and retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

STRATEGY 2

Strengthen arts education in all pre-K-12 schools — public, private, charter.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
<p>1. Ensure arts instruction in all five disciplines²⁷ in all schools.</p> <p>\$\$\$</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors of Charlotte arts organizations and their education staff • Arts Education Coordinator • CMS Arts Education staff and arts curriculum specialists from private/charter institutions • Higher education leadership • Local teaching artists • School leaders across the county • County commissioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local arts teachers/educators • ASC • Local artists • Civic/community leaders • Classroom Central • Corporations • Private philanthropy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools will have full-time arts teachers and teacher’s aides (staff) in all five disciplines. The outcomes will be that students will be exposed to and build interest in each of the five disciplines. Establishing pipelines for students’ interests in the disciplines will allow for further persistence in pursuit of their artistic journeys. • Artists in the community will be trained to serve the schools with capacities to support the schools with projects, educational materials, and real-world experiences. Each artist will be trained in developmentally appropriate teaching methods for students of all ages, so they are impactful in the classroom. Students will build interest and passion for real-world application of art principles studied by matching them with artists practicing in the community. The aim is to see further collaboration and social capital building between students and artists. • Experiential learning opportunities are powerful for students. Each student will be able to go on one artistic field trip in each grade that is aligned with art standards. This will expose students to real-world artistic application, build a sense of community, foster collaboration, and development of Charlotte-Mecklenburg art projects. • All classrooms must be equipped with the supplies and materials needed to teach and for students to learn. Teachers should be able to shop at a “Classroom Central” for art supplies so that students’ creativity isn’t limited to the materials they have in their classrooms. The hope is that teachers do not have to spend their own money on art supplies.
<p>2. Form, train, and provide funding to employ a robust and diverse corps of full-time arts educators and teaching artists.</p> <p>\$\$</p>						
<p>3. Provide field trips to arts and cultural experiences²⁸ for students in all grades</p> <p>\$\$\$</p>						
<p>4. Provide adequate materials/supplies for classrooms and projects. (Including technology, materials, supplies, etc.)</p> <p>\$\$\$</p>						

²⁷ Five disciplines include: dance, digital media, music, theatre, and visual arts.

²⁸ As referenced in the Glossary of terms, examples of cultural institutions include museums (types of museums: including art, history, natural history/anthropology, and general museums, children’s museums, science centers, planetariums, nature centers, historic houses/sites, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, and arboretums), libraries, archives, art galleries, theaters, concert halls etc.

PRIORITY #8

Expand arts education — early childhood to lifelong learners — experiences for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, workforce development, and retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

STRATEGY 3

Increase support for arts teachers and teaching artists through increased funding, leveraging community partnerships and professional development opportunities.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Organize professional development and create renewal opportunities for arts teachers and teaching artists. 💰💰						
2. Create unique fund for arts educators to apply for technical assistance grants for materials and individual professional development to decrease out of pocket expenses. 💰💰				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art education leaders at CMS and all schools from day care to higher education • Business leaders with interest in workforce development and retention • Higher education arts program in the area including: UNC Charlotte, Davidson College, JCSU, CPCC, and Queens University • Before and after school programs • Leaders of local arts groups, festivals, and non-profits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artist cooperatives like Goodyear, BLKMRKTCLT, VAPA Center, and others • Art teachers and teaching arts involved with community art projects • Businesses • Parent Teacher Organizations • Arts supporter groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More centered and re-energized teachers. • Equitable access to training programs. • Better connectivity between classroom and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg cultural scene. • Effectively funded incentives for cultural institutions to coordinate with arts educators. • Increased learning opportunities for all ages. • More higher education opportunities for residents in the arts to keep folks local.
3. Build greater connections between arts educators, local artists and organizations to create more educational opportunities. • Subsidized art educator discounts to local arts/events etc. • Arts Education Coordinator to help foster, manage, and encourage inclusion of arts educators. 💰						
4. Collaborate with corporate funders to invest in arts education addressing future innovation.						

PRIORITY #8

Expand arts education — early childhood to lifelong learners — experiences for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, workforce development, and retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

STRATEGY 4

Fortify and expand educational programming from local arts organizations.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Utilize data from arts education impact research (Strategy #1) and determine what gaps exist. \$						
2. Fund development of new programs or provide subsidies for expansion of existing programs. A. Curriculum-based programs that support arts teachers in schools, homeschools, etc. B. More subsidized/affordable extracurricular arts programs for children/teens. C. Innovative adult education initiatives. D. Arts and technology programs. \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors of Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts organizations and their education staff. • Arts Education Coordinator • CMS Arts education staff and arts curriculum specialists from private/charter institutions • Higher education leadership • Local teaching artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital technology organizations, such as Digibridge, Dottie Rose Foundation, Potions, and Pixels • Local arts teachers/educators • ASC • Local artists • Civic/community leaders • Corporations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts organizations will have the resources to offer educational programming. • Comprehensive and diverse programming that spans all ages and demographics. • Programs that are financially sustained year after year and thus able to grow in scope/impact. • Fluid communication and collaboration among arts organizations, educational institutions, and the public.
3. Arts Education Coordinator will help connect programs across the cultural/educational landscape to maximize impact and fill in opportunity gaps. \$						

PRIORITY #8

Expand arts education — early childhood to lifelong learners — experiences for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, workforce development, and retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

STRATEGY 5

Create pathways for people to become professional artists, entrepreneurs, and business owners within the creative sectors.

Action/Cost	Short: 1-3 years	Medium: 4-6 years	Long: 7-10 years	Leaders	Potential Partners	Outcomes
1. Develop Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts programs across the arts spectrum in regional public and private institutes of higher learning. \$ \$ \$ \$						
2. Create more paid internships and apprenticeships for students and aspiring artists in different disciplines. \$ \$ \$						
3. Provide incentives to arts entities for increased memberships and hiring artists who belong to professional unions (Actor's Equity, Charlotte Musicians' Association, IATSE and others) that guarantee baseline wages and healthcare. \$ \$ \$ \$				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College and university leaders, UNC Board of Governors • Executive and artistic directors of arts organizations • Elected officials responsible for granting incentives, executive directors • Artistic directors and boards of arts organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City leaders and arts advocates • Media and other amplifiers (like Charlotte is Creative) to make the public aware of the opportunities • Local business community • MeckED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and retain more burgeoning artists to the region. Through their increased incomes, creatives will contribute even more to the region's economy. • More opportunities to learn and grow as lifelong learners. • Stability within the arts sector for emerging artists; the region becomes "friendlier" for emerging artists. • Support/pathways for artists to become entrepreneurial.
4. Design and implement more classes through Central Piedmont Community College's Associate of Fine Arts Programs and CPCC's Small Business Center. \$ \$						





Appendix A:

Acknowledgements

Sector Workshop, Little Rock Cultural Center

Acknowledgements

Arts and Culture Plan Steering Group

Arts and Culture Advisory Board

Alleen Barber, Director, Executive Communications, Lowe's

Charles Bowman, Bank of America President of North Carolina and Vice Chair for Wealth Management in North Carolina (Retired)

Aisha Dew, Artist, Arts Administrator and Political Strategist

Julie Eiselt, Former Charlotte City Council Mayor Pro Tem and At-large Commissioner

Irisol Gonzalez*, Charlotte Artist

Melody Gross, Domestic Violence Prevention, Courageous SHIFT

Alvin Jacobs, Jr., Photographer and Activist

Lex Kimbrough*, Filmmaker, Brave Boy Media

Su Ping Lu, General Counsel—Securities, Governance and Corporate Finance, Honeywell

Shefalee Patel, Independent Artist and Community Volunteer

Corey Mitchell, Arts Educator and Founder/Artistic Director, Theatre Gap Initiative

Grace Nystrum, SVP, Strategic Market Executive—Charlotte, Global Banking and Markets, Bank of America

Cyndee G. Patterson, Advisory Board Chair; President, Lee Institute/The Duke Mansion (Retired)

Kevin L. Patterson, Vice Chair, Arts and Community Board Member

Pat Phillips, Independent Financial Services Professional (Retired)

Lisa N. Schoder*, Vice President of Integrated Media and Partnerships, Lowe's

Charles Thomas, Charlotte Program Director, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Nick Tosco, Attorney, Poyner Spruill

April Whitlock, Head of Corporate Citizenship, LendingTree

Dr. Ricky A. Woods, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church-West

**Former Advisory Board Member, participated in process*

Additional Steering Group Members

Carla Aaron-Lopez*, Photographer, Printmaker, Curator and Collagist

Jose Alvarez, Vice President of Prospera-North Carolina

David Butler, Photographer and Videographer, Hue House co-founder

Alli Celebron-Brown, President & CEO of McColl Center

CarlosAlexis Cruz, Associate Professor of Physical Theatre- UNC Charlotte

MyLoan Dinh, Multidisciplinary Artist

Charlie Elbersen, Insights and Brand Strategy Senior Director, Wray Ward

Dr. Maha Gingrich, Lead Control Management Officer-Policy and Governance at Wells Fargo

Lois Ingham, Vice President, Community Engagement & Corporate Responsibility at Atrium Health

Leslie Johnson, Deputy County Manager for Sustainable Communities

Manoj Kesavan, Founder and Director of Charlotte BOOM Festival

Joe Kuhlmann, Owner of The Evening Muse

Chandra McCloud, Dance Department Chair, Northwest School of the Arts, UNC Charlotte

Tim Miner*, Co-Founder of Charlotte is Creative

Tom Murray, CEO at Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Samantha Nevins, Executive Director- Disability Rights & Resources

Joanne Rogers, Gallery Owner at Nine Eighteen Nine Studio Gallery, LLC, Co-Founder of VAPA Center

Doug Singleton, Executive Director of Charlotte Ballet

Kristopher Smith, Senior Vice President, Strategy & Initiatives Manager at Bank of America

Bob Stickler, Board member, Charlotte Museum of History

Krista Terrell, President of the Arts & Science Council
Marcellus Turner, CEO and Chief Librarian of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

Jay Ward, City of Charlotte Inaugural Poet Laureate

Meg Whalen, Director of Communications and External Relations at UNC Charlotte

Mike Wirth, Visual artist, digital experience designer, muralist, Associate Professor of Graphic Design at Queens University

**Former Advisory Board Members*

City of Charlotte Staff

Priya Sircar, Arts and Culture Officer

Brittany Clampitt, City of Charlotte Communications

Charlotte Lamb, Strategy and Budget

Julia Martin, City Manager's Office

Interviewees and Participating Groups

Individual Interviews:

1. Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte
2. Wes Andress, Regional President for PNC Bank in Western Carolina
3. Roderick Banks, Senior Vice President, Lead Community Relations Consultant, Wells Fargo
4. Ryan Bergman, Strategy & Budget Director at City of Charlotte
5. Tariq Bokhari, District 6 Member, Charlotte City Council
6. Brent Cagle, Assistant City Manager, City of Charlotte
7. Alli Celebron-Brown, President and CEO of McColl Center
8. Erin Chantry, Manager, Urban Design Center, City of Charlotte
9. Dena Diorio, County Manager, Mecklenburg County
10. MyLoan Dinh, Multidisciplinary Artist
11. Tracy Dodson, Assistant City Manager and Economic Development Director, City of Charlotte
12. Edmund Driggs, District 7 Member, Charlotte City Council
13. George Dunlap, Chairman of Board of Mecklenburg County Commissioners and District 3 Commissioner
14. Larken Egleston, Former Charlotte City Councilmember
15. Julie Eiselt, Former Mayor Pro Tem, City of Charlotte
16. Lois England, Vice President, Community Engagement & Corporate Responsibility at Atrium Health
17. Jay Everette, Senior Philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility Leader, Wells Fargo
18. David Fisk, President and CEO, Charlotte Symphony
19. Tom Gabbard, President and CEO, Blumenthal Performing Arts
20. Davita Galloway, Founder and Co-owner of dupp&swat
21. Malcolm Graham, District 2 Member, Charlotte City Council
22. Lauren Harkey, Vice Chair of the Public Art Commission. Owner/Director – Hodges Taylor Art Consultancy (City of Charlotte Appointee)
23. Dr. Todd Herman, President and CEO of the Mint Museum
24. Monica Holmes, Executive Manager, Corridors of Opportunity and Assistant Director of Planning, Design, and Development, Design + Preservation Division
25. Tobe Holmes, Planning and Development Director, University City Partners
26. Mark Jerrell, District 4 Commissioner, Mecklenburg County
27. Renee Johnson, District 4 Member, Charlotte City Council; Founder and Executive Director, Triumph Services.
28. Marcus Jones, City Manager, City of Charlotte

29. Tom Lawrence, Executive Director, The Leon Levine Foundation
30. Mary Mack, Senior Executive Vice President and CEO of Consumer and Small Business Banking, Wells Fargo
31. Michael Marsicano, President and CEO, Foundation For The Carolinas
32. Hugh McColl, Co-Founder and Chairman Emeritus, Falfurrias Capital Partners
33. Laura Meier, District 5 Member, Charlotte City Council
34. Tim Miner, Co-Founder, Charlotte is Creative
35. Brook Muller, Dean of the College of Arts + Architecture, UNC Charlotte
36. Eric Mullis, Executive Director, Goodyear Arts
37. Tom Murray, CEO, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority (CRVA)
38. Matt Newton, Former District 5 Member, Charlotte City Council
39. Matt Olin, Co-Founder, Charlotte Is Creative; Co-Publisher, The Biscuit; Host of CreativeMornings/Charlotte
40. Jill Olmstead, Chief Human Resources Officer, LendingTree
41. Cyndee Patterson, Advisory Board Chair; (Retired) President, Lee Institute/The Duke Mansion
42. Kevin Patterson, Vice Chair, Arts and Community Board Member
43. Susan Patterson, Former Board Chair, Arts & Science Council
44. Greg Phipps, Former District 4 Member, Charlotte City Council
45. Justin Pierce, Lead Media Arts Teacher, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS)
46. Su Ping Lu, General Counsel - Securities, Governance and Corporate Finance, Honeywell
47. Elaine Powell, District 1 Commissioner and Vice Chair, Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners
48. Susan Rodriguez-McDowell, District 6 Commissioner, Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners
49. Victoria Rogers, Vice President for Arts, Knight Foundation
50. Till Schmidt-Rimpler, Founder, Moving Poets in Charlotte
51. Doug Singleton, Executive Director, Charlotte Ballet
52. Todd Smith, Executive Director, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art
53. Michael Smith, President and CEO, Charlotte Center City Partners
54. Anna Spangler Nelson, Chairman, Spangler Companies, Inc.
55. Bree Stallings, Director of Artistic Experiences, Blumenthal Performing Arts
56. Marcey Stone, Leading Corporate Social Responsibility, Honeywell
57. Amy Strecker, President, Duke Energy Foundation
58. David Taylor, President and CEO, Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts and Culture
59. Krista Terrell, President, Arts & Science Council (ASC)
60. Victoria Watlington, District 3 Member, Charlotte City Council
61. April Whitlock, Head of Corporate Citizenship, LendingTree
62. Lacey Williams, Program Manager, City of Charlotte
63. Catherine Wilson Horne, President and CEO, Discovery Place
64. Braxton Winston, Mayor Pro Tem, Charlotte City Council

Group Interviews:

Hispanic-Latino Leadership Council

City Staff Roundtable

County Staff Roundtable

Arts Organization Focus Group

- BOOM Charlotte, Manoj Kesavan
- Three Bone Theater, Becky Schultz, Robin Tynes-Miller
- Nouveau Sud, Carlos Alexis Cruz
- Discovery Place, Audra Acey
- India Association of Charlotte, Lal Vishin

City of Charlotte Placemaking Group

- Angela Berry
- Jackie Clare
- Erin Gillespie
- Bruce Jones
- Chris Lange
- Casey Mashburn
- Brandon Ray
- Justin Ritchey

Host Sites for Public Engagement
AvidXchange

- Charlotte Art League
- Goodyear Arts
- Independent Picture House
- Innovation Barn
- Little Rock Cultural Center
- Nine Eighteen Nine Studio Gallery at VAPA Center

Implementation Task Forces

Task Force 1: Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

- Cyndee Patterson, Co-Chair
- Charles Bowman, Co-Chair
- Alli Celebron-Brown
- Julie Eiselt
- Mariama Holman
- Michael Marsicano
- Tim Miner
- Krista Terrell
- Robin Tynes Miller

Task Force 2: The public sector must partner with an already active private sector in playing a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Kevin Patterson, Co-Chair | Charlie Elbersen |
| Pat Phillips, Co-Chair | Maha Gingrich |
| Amy Bagwell | Grace Nystrum |
| David Butler | Susan Patterson |
| | Bob Stickler |

Task Force 3: Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Joanne Rogers, Co-Chair | Rob Horton |
| MT Turner, Co-Chair | Joe Kuhlmann |
| Jim Dukes | Alvin C. Jacobs, Jr. |
| Tom Gabbard | Arthur Rogers |
| Jenni Gaisbauer | Doug Singleton |
| | Emerson Stoldt |

Task Force 4: Eliminate real and perceived barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Aisha Dew, Co-Chair | Jose Alvarez |
| Matt Olin, Co-Chair | David Fisk |
| Brian Collier | Samantha Nevins |
| DeNeer Davis | Rupam Varma |
| Carla Aaron-Lopez | Rev. Ricky Woods |
| | Michael Zytchow |

Task Force 5: An equitable, accessible, and inclusive approach to support and fund is critical to advance, grow and sustain BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and other artists and institutions — particularly small and mid-sized organizations — that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

Charles Thomas, Co-Chair	Gina Esquivel
Manoj Kesavan, Co-Chair	Valaida Fullwood
Alexandra Arrington	Melody Gross
Janeen Bryant	Lois Ingleland
MyLoan Dinh	Khaleel Loyd

Task Force 6: Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

April Whitlock, Co-Chair
 Nick Tosco, Co-Chair
 Alleen Barber
 Marcie Kelso
 Tom Murray
 Rachel Sutherland
 Jay Ward
 Mike Wirth

Task Force 7: Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

Shafalee Patel, Co-Chair
 Carlos Alexis Cruz, Co-Chair
 Leslie Johnson
 Keith Stanley
 Rick Thurmond

Task Force 8: Expand arts education experiences — pre-K through 12, post-secondary, and lifelong — for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, workforce development, and retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

Meg Whalen, Co-Chair	Chandra McCloud
Corey Mitchell, Co-Chair	Betsy Rosen
Su Ping Lu	Alyssa Sharpe
	Chris Stonnell

Consultant Planning Team

Lord Cultural Resources	Fourth Economy	Civility Localized
Joy Bailey-Bryant	Rich Overmoyer	Christine Edwards
Eve Moros Ortega	Nicole Muise-Kielkucki	Enovia Bedford
Tiffany Lyons	Victoria Adams	
Valerie Guevara	Phipps	

Infusion Fund Partners

Albemarle Foundation; Ally Financial; Atrium Health; Bank of America; Barings; C.D. Spangler Foundation/National Gypsum; The Centene Charitable Foundation; Childress Klein Properties; Coca-Cola Consolidated; Deloitte; Duke Energy; EY; Fifth Third Bank; Foundation For The Carolinas; The Gambrell Foundation; Deidre and Clay Grubb; Honeywell; JELD-WEN, Inc.; John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; LendingTree Foundation; Lowe’s Companies, Inc.; Leslie and Michael Marsicano; Jane and Hugh McColl; Moore & Van Allen; Novant Health; Nucor Corporation; PNC Bank; Premier, Inc.; PwC; Red Ventures; Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A.; Rodgers Builders; Jane and Nelson Schwab; Trane Technologies; Truist and Wells Fargo.

To everyone who participated in the countywide meetings, sector workshops, drop-in events; who took the survey, hosted neighborhood conversations, and in many other ways contributed to this community plan — Thank you.



Appendix B:

Actions Recommended for Implementation in Years 1, 2 and 3

Actions Recommended for Implementation in Years 1, 2 and 3

The following recommendations are characterized as “must-do” and “quick wins”.

YEAR 1: MUST-DO

PRIORITY 1 Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.

Strategy 1 Secure significant, ongoing public sector support — primarily ongoing, annual support from the city and county, with supplemental support from state, regional, and national sources.

Actions

1. Work with local business organizations to develop plan for securing additional public funding.
3. Secure commitment for sustainable local public sector funding.

Strategy 2 Foster ongoing/increasing private financial participation.

Actions

1. Foster support by the private sector including but not limited to operational support, corporate sponsorships, capital, endowments, planning, and policy development.
2. Support artists/ creatives and organizations through earned revenue streams and engagements.

Strategy 3 Build organizational development capabilities.

Actions

2. Create technical assistance programs for organizations.

PRIORITY 2: The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

Strategy 1 Establish and implement a joint, public-private governance structure focused on cultivating a sustainable, thriving arts and culture ecosystem in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Actions

1. Establish and maintain an oversight board/committee/council of approximately 12-16 members with representation from public sector entities (including city and county), private sector (business and philanthropy), arts and culture (artists/creatives, nonprofit organizations, and creative businesses), with half of board members coming from arts and culture.
2. Establish and maintain a working group of entities — represented by their senior staff, led by a senior executive, and with appropriate support staff — that drives, monitors, and iterates on implementation of the arts and culture plan; the working group includes key entities necessary for leading successful implementation of the plan from public, private, and arts and culture sectors.
3. Establish and maintain advisory committees/ councils — focused on the priorities of the arts and culture plan — that monitor and advise on implementation and iteration of the plan. These work closely with the working group and the oversight board/committee/council, via representation from the oversight group on each advisory committee/council. Each includes representation from public, private, and arts and culture.
4. Establish working agreements, processes, and funding to guide and enable the work of the governance structure.
5. Spearhead and coordinate implementation of the arts and culture plan; regularly evaluate and report on implementation progress; and, work with partners to iterate on the plan as needed.

Strategy 2 Ensure and coordinate ongoing delivery of equitable, accessible, and inclusive funding and services to/for the arts and culture sector.

Actions

1. Distribute reliable, ongoing general operating funding to arts and culture organizations. (See other priority areas, including Priority 3).
2. Establish/provide a range of funding opportunities for artists/creatives, arts and culture project/programs/ initiatives, nonprofits and creative businesses, aligned with the arts and culture plan, prioritizing equity. (See other priority areas, including Priority 3).
5. Support stable and effective operations and utilization of city-owned arts and culture facilities.

PRIORITY 3: Equitable, accessible, and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing and sustaining ALAANA¹, LGBTQIA+² and other artists and institutions—particularly small and mid-sized organizations—that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte arts ecosystem.

Strategy 1 As part of the new governance process, ensure that equity goals are defined, and progress is regularly evaluated and reported by an external auditing body.

Actions

1. Establish scope of group and ideal representation (to reflect Census percent representation and other sub-groups such as LGBTQ19, people with a range of abilities, women and ALAANA20 communities).
3. Research similar organizations to learn best practices.
5. Create metrics for evaluation. Review and update these metrics periodically.
6. Establish an equity dashboard.

¹ ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

² LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

YEAR 1: QUICK WINS

PRIORITY 2 The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.

Strategy 3 Shift the decision making for funding and the direction of the arts sector to be more inclusive and transparent.

Action 1 Provide equity training for leadership within legacy organizations. (Organizations with annual income exceeding \$5M and are 20+ years old e.g ASC, FFTC, Mint Museum, Bechtler Museum, Harvey B. Gantt).

PRIORITY 3 Equitable, accessible and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing and sustaining ALAANA³, LGBTQIA+⁴ and other artists and institutions—particularly small and mid-sized organizations—that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture ecosystem.

Strategy 2 Create an ecosystem of funding to support artists and arts and culture organizations at multiple levels or tiers; tiers may be based on the organization's budget size.

Actions

2. Create an arts sector map of funders including their arts focus and the types of organizations they fund.
3. Identify ecosystem funding gaps. Align funders to the artists groups/tiers to address identified funding gaps

Strategy 3 Provide an application and a grant process designed to engage and attract artists and organizations who traditionally are underrepresented in funding awards to apply for grants.

Actions

1. Collect data/feedback on biggest areas of difficulty for individual artists (using previous applicants to Arts and Culture funding).

³ ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

⁴ LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

2. Confer with other funders who have tried a similar approach (United Way of Greater Charlotte, Dallas Cultural Plan/ Equity Statement & corresponding actions).
3. Determine criteria for organizations (large, mid, small; Dallas Cultural Plan/ Equity Statement and corresponding actions).
4. Determine criteria for individual artists (incorporated versus unincorporated).

Strategy 4 Create Growth Fund: Create resource (funding and training) pathways for individual artists, small, mid-size, and grassroots organizations to advance with mentoring, guidance, and assistance.

- Actions
1. Determine criteria for organizations.
 2. Determine criteria for individual artists.
 3. Determine where emerging artists and organizations are at and tailor resources to need.

PRIORITY 4 Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

Strategy 2 Partner with developers and corporations to intentionally build, renovate, incorporate, and operate multidisciplinary art spaces into new construction and existing buildings for practice/rehearsal/creation/ display and experiences.

- Actions
1. Use corporate lobbies for artists' exhibit spaces.
 3. Increase murals on exterior surfaces.

Strategy 3 Prioritize local artist access and affordability to city-/county-owned public art and non-traditional art spaces (i.e., libraries, schools, parks, houses of faith, etc.).

- Action
4. Ensure city-/county-owned facilities are available for affordable use by local artists and arts and culture organizations.

PRIORITY 5: Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.

Strategy 2 Enable cross-cultural shared collaborations, shared experiences throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg and an abundance of diverse, local creative work throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

- Actions
1. Create a directory of Charlotte art organizations and artists, letting them specify if they're interested in working on cross-cultural collaborations.

Those interested can then contact each other through the directory to create new partnerships.

2. Create a mobile arts and culture program to transport creative programming throughout neighborhoods county-wide, ensuring that such a program involves the creation and sharing of authentic cultural experiences versus simply “importing” unsolicited arts and culture offerings.
3. Ensure arts and culture experiences are embedded into Charlotte’s mobility — e.g., artistic activations at transit stations, urban trails/greenways, and bus stops.
4. Reflect the full range of artistic disciplines and forms practiced in Charlotte-Mecklenburg and increase representation by local artists/creatives in public art.

Strategy 3 Support creatives in communities.

Actions

1. Create a community artists’ program (pilot in Corridors of Opportunity, then replicate in all other areas) in which artists from those neighborhoods are supported to create community-reflective work, engage with their community, and mentor younger generations of emerging creatives.

PRIORITY 6 Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

Strategy 1 Conduct qualitative and quantitative market research in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to understand:

- *Attitudes of non-participants toward the arts and motivating factors for arts and culture participation.*
- *Extent of support by participants and reasons for support (or lack thereof).*
- *Perceptions of the value of a vibrant arts and culture ecosystem in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.*

Action

3. Visit peer cities to understand how they engage non-cultural participants and how they promote individual giving.

PRIORITY 7 Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

Strategy 1 Incentivize and enable cross-sector collaborations within the creative ecosystem and with other sectors (such as healthcare, manufacturing, education, social service, etc.) through funding and technical support.

Action 4 Expand upon existing collaborations among large organizations, small to midsized groups, individual artists, and creatives, while creating new ones. Achieved through access to spaces, financial support and compensation, co-development of programming, and other means.

Strategy 2 Build capacity for collaborations across the sector through networking, infrastructure, and financial resources.

Action 1 Identify key partners who have strong, diverse, well-connected networks and platforms to facilitate potential first steps in collaborations.

PRIORITY 8 Expand arts education experiences—early childhood to lifelong learners—for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, robust workforce development, and the retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

Strategy 1 Articulate and advocate for the value of arts education across all demographic sectors, i.e., all ages, races, gender, ethnicities, geographic locations, etc.

- Actions
1. Identify different audiences (policy makers, funders, general public, corporate leaders, education administrators).
 2. Define arts education, outcomes, skills, etc. and articulate the many benefits of arts education.

YEAR 2: MUST-DO

PRIORITY 1	Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.
<i>Strategy 3</i> Action	<p><i>Build organizational development capabilities.</i></p> <p>3. Assess, develop, launch, and complete capital and endowment campaign(s), Providing professional expertise to Organizations regarding campaign feasibility and strategy.</p> <p>4. Identify funds from new funding source(s) to support development staff at organizations.</p>
<i>Strategy 4</i>	<p><i>Build capacity of organizations and artists/creatives to develop sustainable revenue models appropriate to their respective operating models (nonprofit, for profit, individual). (See Priority 2 re: coordination and implementation of arts and culture plan priorities).</i></p>
Actions	<p>2. Secure grant funds and sponsorships for participants of capacity building programs.</p>
PRIORITY 2	The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery.
<i>Strategy 2</i>	<p><i>Ensure and coordinate ongoing delivery of equitable, accessible, and inclusive funding and services to/for the arts and culture sector.</i></p>
Actions	<p>3. Establish/provide capacity building and professional development programs and support for the arts and culture sector, artists/ creatives, and organizations of all types/sizes, prioritizing equity. (See Priority 3 and other priorities in the arts and culture plan).</p> <p>4. Coordinate with local, regional, state, and national partners across sectors to cultivate the local arts and culture sector and arts and culture opportunities for Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents and visitors in alignment with the vision and strategies in this arts and culture plan (See other priorities in plan).</p>

PRIORITY 3: Equitable, accessible and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing and sustaining ALAANA⁵, LGBTQIA+⁶ and other artists and institutions-particularly small and mid-sized organizations-that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte arts ecosystem.

Strategy 2 Create an ecosystem of funding to support artists and arts and culture organizations at multiple levels or tiers; tiers may be based on the organization’s budget size.

Actions

1. Develop profiles for artists and arts organizations who receive funding in Charlotte. Organizations might be defined by budget or staffing size.
3. Identify ecosystem funding gaps. Align funders to the artists groups/tiers to address identified funding gaps.

PRIORITY 4 Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

Strategy 1 Partner with city/county/private businesses to 1) convert vacant spaces into multidisciplinary art centers and 2) identify /incentivize the creation of arts districts inclusive of all forms of art for creation/rehearsal/ practice/display and experience of art.

Action 1 Work with city/county/private businesses to identify and convert vacant spaces for possible temporary and/or long-term use rather than tear down or remain completely empty. Ensure that they are usable as creation/rehearsal/ display, live/workspace, and experience spaces.

PRIORITY 6 Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

Strategy 1 Conduct qualitative and quantitative market research in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to understand:

- *Attitudes of “non-participants” toward the arts and motivating factors for arts and culture participation.*
- *Extent of support by “participants” and reasons for support (or lack thereof).*
- *Perceptions of the value of a vibrant arts and culture ecosystem in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.*

⁵ ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

⁶ LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

- Actions
1. RFP process to define research projects and identify a research partner.
 2. Engage market research firms (one for each project).

PRIORITY 8 **Expand arts education experiences—early childhood to lifelong learners—for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, robust workforce development, and the retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.**

Strategy 1 *Articulate and advocate for the value of arts education across all demographic sectors, i.e., all ages, races, gender, ethnicities, geographic locations, etc.*

- Actions
3. Provide field trips to arts and cultural experiences for students in all grades.
 4. Provide adequate materials/ supplies for classrooms and projects. (Including technology, materials, supplies, etc.)
 5. Create messages and materials for all platforms, print and digital.
 6. Identify and rally “messengers,” advocates who can help communicate.
 7. Place and promote messages.
 8. Develop local assessments, data pools of impacts of arts education in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Strategy 3 *Increase support for arts teachers and teaching artists through increased funding, leveraging community partnerships and professional development opportunities.*

- Actions
1. Organize professional development and create renewal opportunities for arts teachers and teaching artists.
 3. Build greater connections between arts educators, local artists and organizations to create more educational opportunities.
 - Subsidized art educator discounts to local arts/events etc.
 - Arts Education Coordinator to help foster, manage, and encourage inclusion of arts educators.

Strategy 4

Fortify and expand educational programming from local arts organizations.

Action 1

Utilize data from arts education impact research (Strategy #1) and determine what gaps exist.

Strategy 5

Create pathways for people to become professional artists, entrepreneurs, and business owners within the creative sectors.

Action 2

2 Create more paid internships and apprenticeships for students and aspiring artists in different disciplines.

YEAR 2: QUICK WINS

PRIORITY 1: **Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.**

Strategy 4 *Build capacity of organizations and artists/creatives to develop sustainable revenue models appropriate to their respective operating models (nonprofit, for profit, individual). (See Priority 2 re: coordination and implementation of arts and culture plan priorities)*

Actions 1. Identify business incubators that have capacity and expertise to develop curriculum for small arts organizations and individual artists.

 3. Explore opportunities for operational efficiencies, such as a shared administrative services model.

 5. Develop cohort of organizations to share best practices around increasing and sustaining earned revenue.

PRIORITY 4 **Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.**

Strategy 3 *Shift the decision making for funding and the direction of the arts sector to be more inclusive and transparent.*

Action 4 Annual idea, process, and/or resource sharing among larger organizations, grassroots organizations, and individual artists (prior to the start of the new fiscal year).

PRIORITY 5: **Eliminate barriers to arts and culture creation and participation.**

Strategy 2 *Enable cross-cultural shared collaborations, shared experiences throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg and an abundance of diverse, local creative work throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg.*

Actions 5. Integrate placemaking and art into existing and future public infrastructure.
 6. Explore and support use of technology to eliminate barriers to access and enable creativity and connection.

YEAR 3: MUST-DO

PRIORITY 1	Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.
<i>Strategy 1</i>	<i>Secure significant, ongoing public sector support — primarily ongoing, annual support from the city and county, with supplemental support from state, regional, and national sources.</i>
Action 2	Collaborate with state and federal elected officials and organizations to identify and secure funding.
<i>Strategy 4</i>	<i>Build capacity of organizations and artists/creatives to develop sustainable revenue models appropriate to their respective operating models (nonprofit, for profit, individual). (See Priority 2 re: coordination and implementation of arts and culture plan priorities).</i>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Increase earned revenue by organizations and artists/creatives. 6. Encourage and support recipients of grants to dedicate a portion of their funds to marketing and communicating their activities.
PRIORITY 2:	The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem, including governance and funds delivery
<i>Strategy 3</i>	<i>Shift the decision making for funding and the direction of the arts sector to be more inclusive and transparent.</i>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Provide an annual public report detailing specific metrics on percentage of diverse leadership, staff, board members, programming, partnerships, funding allocation, and vendors. 3. Provide progressive multi-year, operational funding to grassroots organizations that desire to grow and expand. 4. Annual idea, process, and/or resource sharing among larger organizations, grassroots organizations, and individual artists (prior to the start of the new fiscal year).

PRIORITY 3: **Equitable, accessible and inclusive support and funding are critical to advancing, growing and sustaining ALAANA⁷, LGBTQIA+⁸ and other artists and institutions-particularly small and mid-sized organizations-that have been historically marginalized in the Charlotte arts ecosystem.**

Strategy 2 *Create an ecosystem of funding to support artists and arts and culture organizations at multiple levels or tiers; tiers may be based on the organization's budget size.*

- Actions
4. Decentralize funding infrastructure to support grant making led by grassroots-based arts organizations such as BOOM, Charlotte is Creative, BLKMRKT, etc.
 5. Report out findings and recommendations to the arts sector including funders and artists.

Strategy 3 *Provide an application and a grant process designed to engage and attract artists and organizations who traditionally are underrepresented in funding awards to apply for grants.*

- Actions
5. Develop web portal.
 7. Explore uniform application and use of technology among local funders to streamline grant process and increase accessibility for applicants.

⁷ ALAANA: The Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan uses the racial and ethnic identifiers African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American.

⁸ LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning), Intersex, Asexual and other associated communities. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

PRIORITY 4: Provide access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture.

Strategy 2 Partner with developers and corporations to intentionally build, renovate, incorporate, and operate multidisciplinary art spaces into new construction and existing buildings for practice/rehearsal/creation/display and experiences.

- Actions
2. Enhance privately-owned public space activation.
 4. Incentivize corporate contributions to vacant space conversions.

Strategy 3 Prioritize local artist access and affordability to city-/county-owned public art and non-traditional art spaces (i.e., libraries, schools, parks, houses of faith, etc.).

- Action
1. List open spaces in a local database or on a calendar.
 2. Market these spaces within the local arts communities.

PRIORITY 6 Achieve widespread awareness and visibility of arts and culture through strengthening communication.

Strategy 1 Conduct qualitative and quantitative market research in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to understand:

- *Attitudes of “non-participants” toward the arts and motivating factors for arts and culture participation.*
- *Extent of support by “participants” and reasons for support (or lack thereof).*
- *Perceptions of the value of a vibrant arts and culture ecosystem in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.*

Action 5

Present information to appropriate cultural institutions, elected officials, and corporate donors.

Strategy 2

Create, implement, and maintain a comprehensive Charlotte-Mecklenburg arts and culture communication plan with revised branding, marketing, and messaging, including social media hashtags or other mediums, in conjunction with the CRVA and other regional partners to encourage increased local participation in arts and culture and to raise national and international visibility of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture offerings.

Actions

1. Develop RFP (or engage vendor to) find a diverse group of marketing communications agencies to develop a cohesive brand statement including graphics, logos, and hashtags (Local artists will be hired to help create the messaging and materials).
2. Develop a cohesive Charlotte Arts and Cultural brand handbook to be distributed widely and used for tourism, economic development, corporate communication, and arts and culture marketing.
3. Develop a communication plan outline. (Create an expectation that it is everyone's responsibility to support the arts).
4. Develop and implement an annual arts and culture communications plan.
5. Develop and implement an annual arts and culture plan media plan/budget.
6. Develop a social media plan.
7. Develop a PR plan.

PRIORITY 7

Foster collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem and with other sectors.

Strategy 2

Build capacity for collaborations across the sector through networking, infrastructure, and financial resources.

Actions

2. Establish a Charlotte/Mecklenburg based network of potential collaborative organizations seeking connections across the field.

3. Mentor collaborating organizations to take it beyond preliminary efforts and encourage deliberate efforts to promote growth and mobility for smaller and grassroots organizations.

PRIORITY 8

Expand arts education experiences—early childhood to lifelong learners—for greater access and exposure to arts and culture, enhancing quality of life, robust workforce development, and the retention and cultivation of future artists and supporters.

Strategy 4

Fortify and expand educational programming from local arts organizations.

Actions

1. Utilize data from arts education impact research (Strategy #1) and determine what gaps exist.

2. Fund development of new programs or provide subsidies for expansion of existing programs.

- a. Curriculum-based programs that support arts teachers in schools, homeschools, etc.
- b. More subsidized/ affordable extracurricular arts programs for children/teens.
- c. Innovative adult education initiatives.
- d. D. Arts and technology programs.

Strategy 5

Create pathways for people to become professional artists, entrepreneurs, and business owners within the creative sectors.

Actions

2. Create more paid internships and apprenticeships for students and aspiring artists in different disciplines.

3. Provide incentives to arts entities for increased memberships and hiring artists who belong to professional unions (Actor’s Equity, Charlotte Musicians’ Association, IATSE and others) that guarantee baseline wages and healthcare.



Appendix C:

Public Engagement

Sector Workshop, Independent Picture House

Public Engagement Detail

The following outlines the methods of public engagement for this planning process:

Countywide Meetings

While arts and culture plan conversations were open to all, the team designed four specific meetings to engage anyone in Charlotte-Mecklenburg interested in strengthening the future of local arts and culture. To ensure broader attendance, two of these meetings took place in person and two were online. The goal of these meetings was to hear from a broad cross section of Charlotte-Mecklenburg community members and residents. Using Eventbrite, the consultant team and city staff created public-facing online registration pages, which it publicized on the city's website and through social media and word of mouth. The in-person meetings featured a large map of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, which participants used to describe where they experienced arts and culture. At other stations, participants described how they thought of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's "superpower." The latter activity helped pinpoint strengths and visualized Charlotte-Mecklenburg's community identity. At the in-person kickoff meeting in August, participants enjoyed a cultural performance by Venezuelan dancers, Mila and Keudis Sanchez of Cultural Spaces Productions, and met vendors from Charlotte-Mecklenburg's creative community. The virtual meetings utilized Slido¹³ polling to replicate the in-person stations. The countywide meetings engaged 201 participants.



Public Engagement for Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan



Public Engagement for Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan

¹³Real-time polling platform

Online Survey of Cultural Participation

In partnership with the steering group, the consultant team and city staff created a survey in English and Spanish to gain input about the needs, priorities, and cultural participation of Charlotte-Mecklenburg creatives, business owners, funders, audiences, and arts and culture organizations. Needs such as workspaces and access to information about events and programs, for example, may help support a vibrant and sustainable arts and culture ecosystem. The surveys were open from late August through mid-November of 2022 to ensure equitable reach and representative participation. The surveys were available on the City of Charlotte's arts and culture webpage and the city's social media accounts, as well as sent to all Eventbrite registrants and the constituents, neighbors, and networks of the steering group. Approximately 1,100 community members completed the survey.

Ambassadors

The ambassador initiative launched in this phase to reach communities and audiences who were not adequately represented in public engagement efforts by the midpoint of those activities. Ambassadors particularly focused on increasing engagement in Spanish-speaking communities. This created more opportunities for all neighborhoods and ZIP codes to be represented in the survey, workshops, and subsequent findings.

Activities of the Ambassador Program

- Attended community events to share information about the process and how people can get involved
- Collected qualitative input from small group discussions within individual neighborhoods
- Engaged their networks on social media to promote awareness of the planning process and encourage survey participation

Community Conversations and DIY Tool Kits

To understand Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture landscape, it was important to meet community members where they are. The team developed a guide to help community members host their own conversations about the future of local arts and culture with their colleagues, neighbors, and families. Local organizations hosted these community conversations, including the Obra Collective, Music Everywhere, Three Bone Theatre, and the Charlotte Dance Alliance. The downloadable toolkits were available on the city's arts and culture webpage in English and Spanish and were also available upon request via the dedicated email address for the plan. The planning team collected responses from these self-facilitated conversations throughout the entirety of the public engagement phase.

Digital Communication and Outreach

Beyond the public engagement strategy developed at the beginning of this phase, the consultant team and city staff developed a communication strategy that would best utilize digital platforms to continue conversations outside of the facilitated meetings and build awareness of all the opportunities to participate in the process. This strategy utilized Facebook events and posts, Instagram filters and posts, a Linktree QR public engagement hub, and a dedicated email for community members to send questions and feedback. Paper versions of the DIY conversation toolkits and postcards with the Linktree QR code were available at all in-person engagements.

Neighborhood/Drop-In Events

The consultant team attended 12 community gatherings throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Charlotte is Creative and Creative Mornings convened three neighborhood workshops, facilitated by members of the arts and culture community. The team distributed flyers with a QR code to the survey and information about upcoming workshops. A key overarching goal of these neighborhood/drop-in events was to reach people who might not otherwise know about the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan process. Through these events, the consultant team and city staff interacted with more than 750 members of the community – that included collecting emails for further engagements. The events included:

- National Night Out, Aug. 2
- Charlotte Creatives at West End Studios Event, Aug. 2
- A Vibe Outside, Aug. 20
- Festival of India, Aug. 27
- Creative Mornings, Sept. 2
- Camino Celebra la Arte & Cultura, Sept. 15
- Charlotte International Arts Festival, Sept. 16
- Black Girl Art Show, Sept. 18
- Live Art Demo with Ricky Singh, Sept. 21
- Johnson C. Smith University Home Game, Sept. 24
- Charlotte Chalk Art Festival, Oct. 1
- Charlotte is Creative, Oct. 20
- Rumbao Latin Dance Social, Oct. 28
- Music Everywhere CLT, Nov. 1
- Obra Collective Artists Community Conversation, Nov. 2
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Arts Educators Roundtable, Nov. 4
- Creative Mornings, Nov. 4

Stakeholder Interviews

The consultant team interviewed more than 100 stakeholders in one-on-one meetings or in small groups, in-person, by telephone, and by virtual meeting. Interviews took place from July 2022 to January 2023. Interviewees included Charlotte City Council members, Mecklenburg County commissioners, cultural leaders such as executive directors of arts and cultural institutions, individual artists and creatives, city and county staff, and representatives from the business and philanthropic community. The consultant team and city staff identified these stakeholders in collaboration with the steering group. The goal of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the arts and culture landscape from various perspectives and to begin prioritizing needs and identifying opportunities.

Sector Workshops

The consultant team and city staff, in collaboration with the steering group, developed a series of 90-minute workshops for 14 arts and culture sectors and topics. The workshops engaged representatives from each sector in focused dialogue about their sector's needs and challenges. Some workshops took place virtually while others were in person. The arts and culture sectors and topics included:

- Arts and culture spaces
- Arts education
- Business and philanthropic community
- Community arts and culture support organizations and neighborhoods
- Creative businesses
- Cultural events and festivals
- Faith communities (i.e., houses of worship)
- Film and media
- Independent artists, creatives, and entrepreneurs
- Museums and cultural heritage institutions
- Music
- Performing arts
- Theater
- Visual arts

